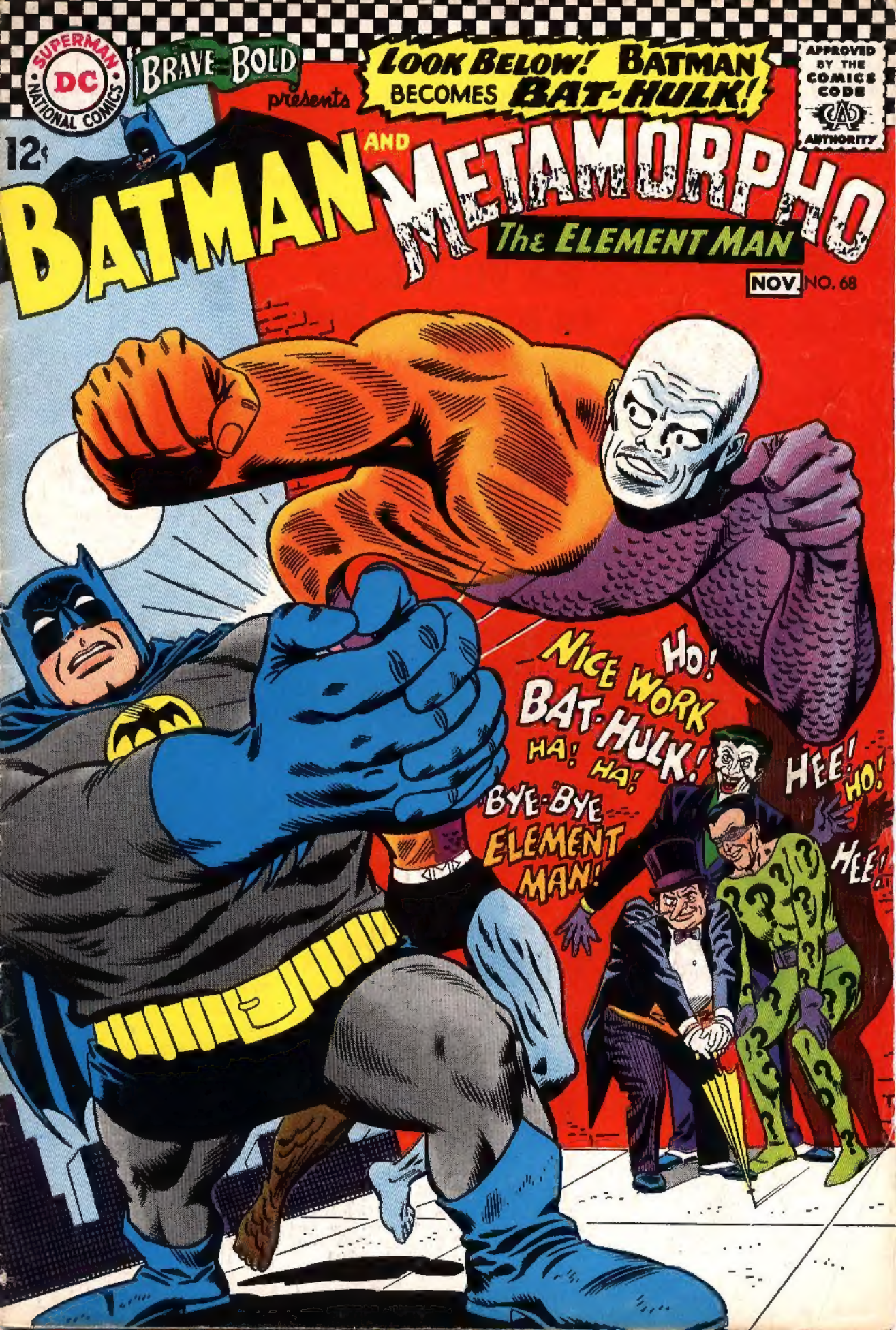
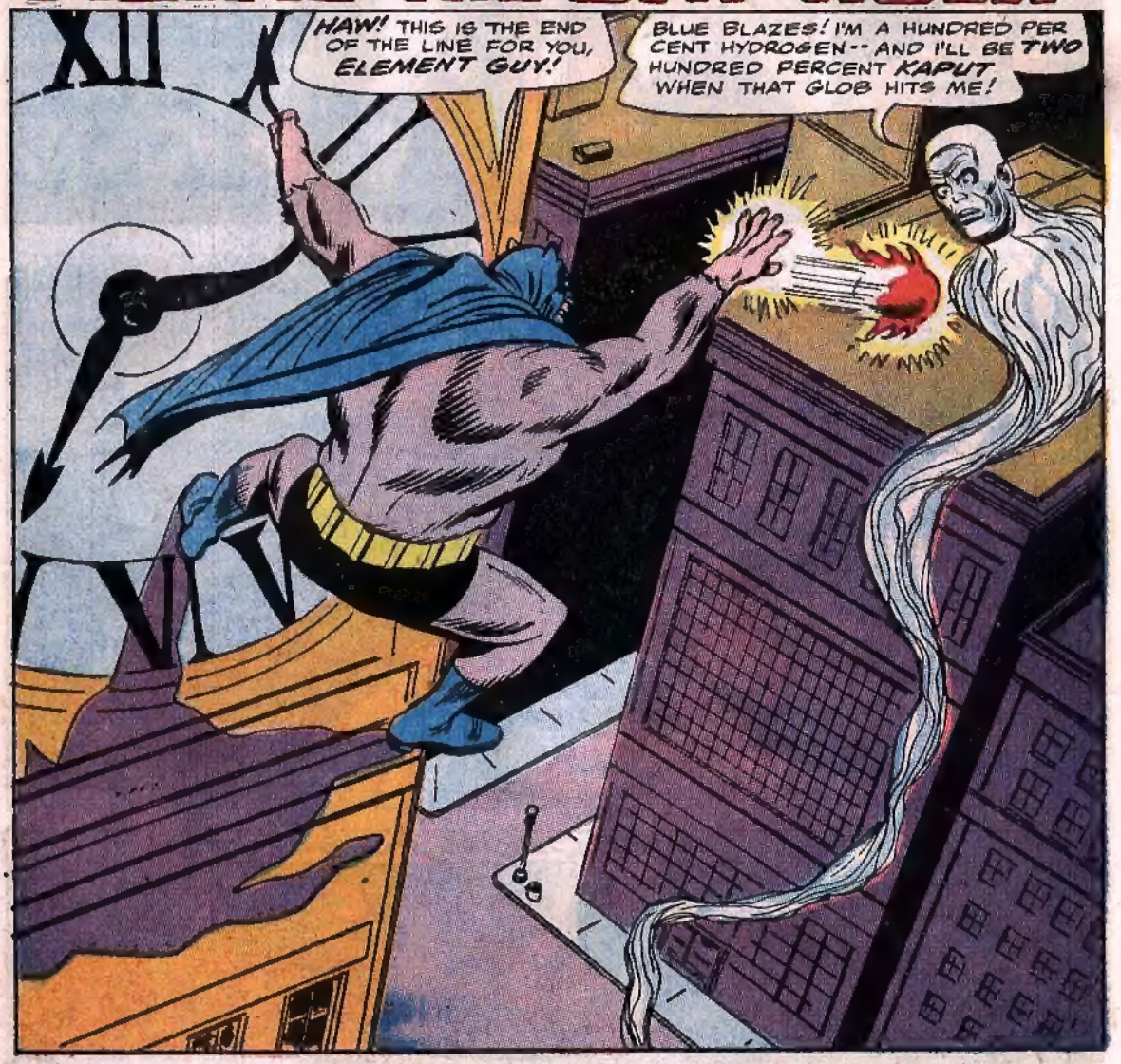

SUPERMAN
DC
NATIONAL COMICS
BRAVE BOLD
presents
LOOK BELOW! BATMAN BECOMES BAT-HULK!
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
12¢
BATMAN AND METAMORPHO
The ELEMENT MAN
NOV. NO. 68
NICE WORK BAT-HULK!
HO! HA! HA!
BYE-BYE ELEMENT MAN!
HEE! HO! HEE!

BRAVE AND BOLD presents

# BATMAN AND METAMORPHO THE ELEMENT MAN

HA! HA! HO! HEE! HEE! THAT FIENDISH LAUGHTER FILLING THE STREETS CAN ONLY MEAN THREE THINGS... **THE JOKER, THE RIDDLER, THE PENGUIN!** BUT HOLD IT! THAT OTHER SOUND... BRUTAL, AWESOME, SAVAGE... **SOMEONE ELSE** IS GIVING **BATMAN** TROUBLE--THE TROUBLE OF HIS CRIME-FIGHTING LIFE! WHICH MEANS THE **CAPED CRUSADER** NEEDS HELP--IN THE FORM OF NONE OTHER THAN **METAMORPHO,** THE FAMED **ELEMENT MAN,** WHO RISES ABOVE A TERRIFIED CITY TO MEET THE CHALLENGE OF...

## ALIAS THE BAT-HULK

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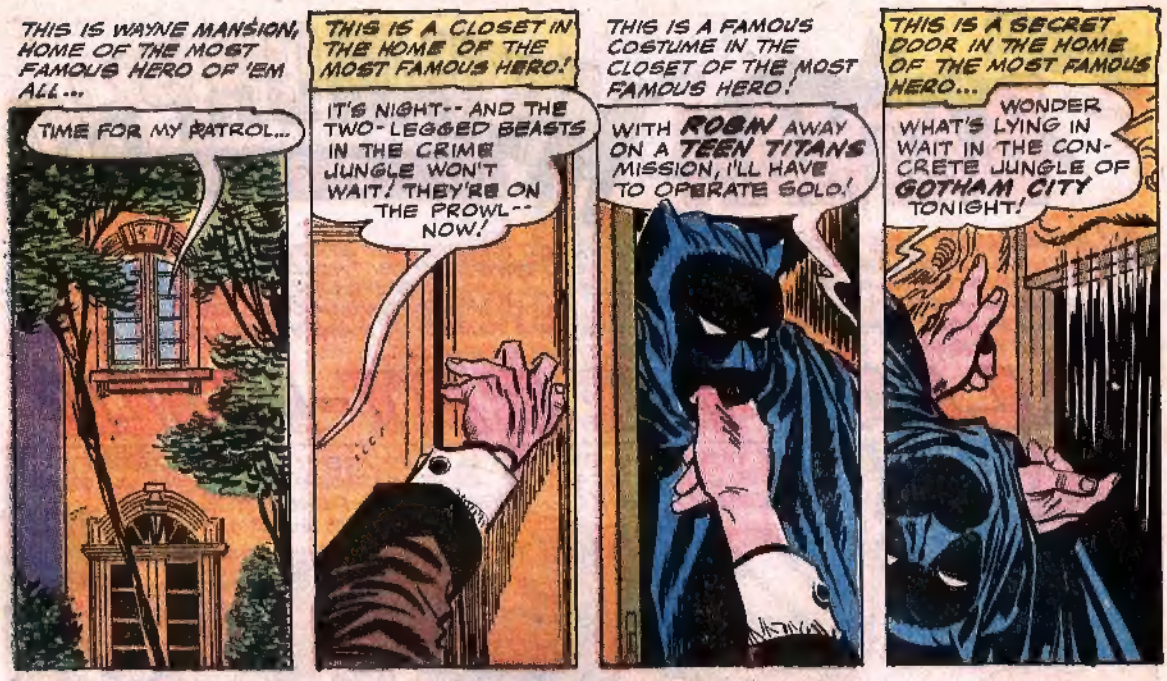
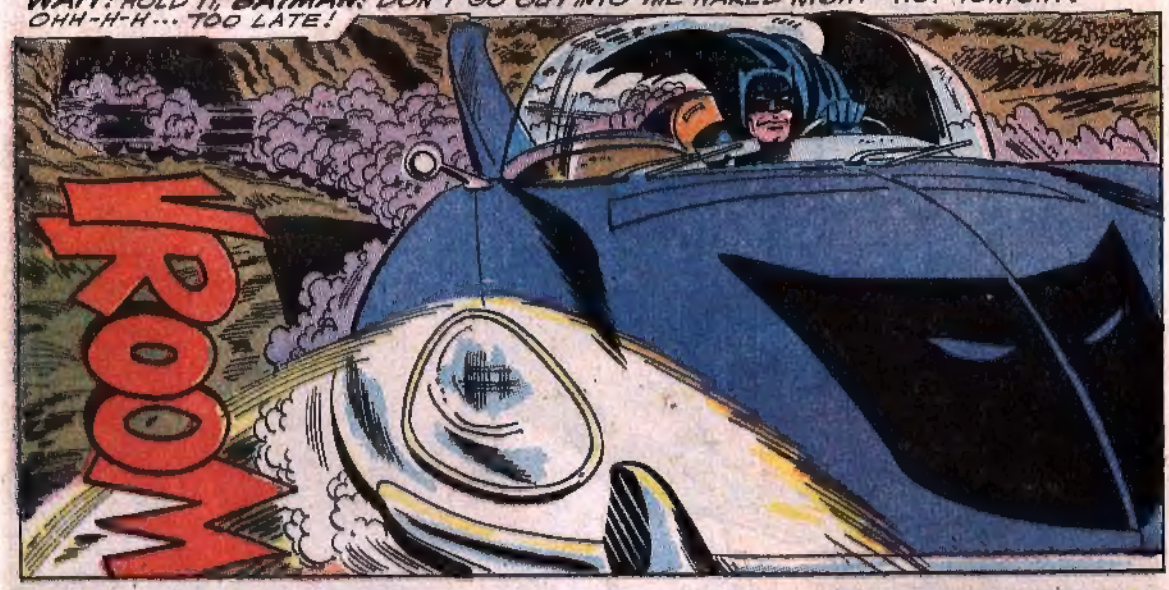
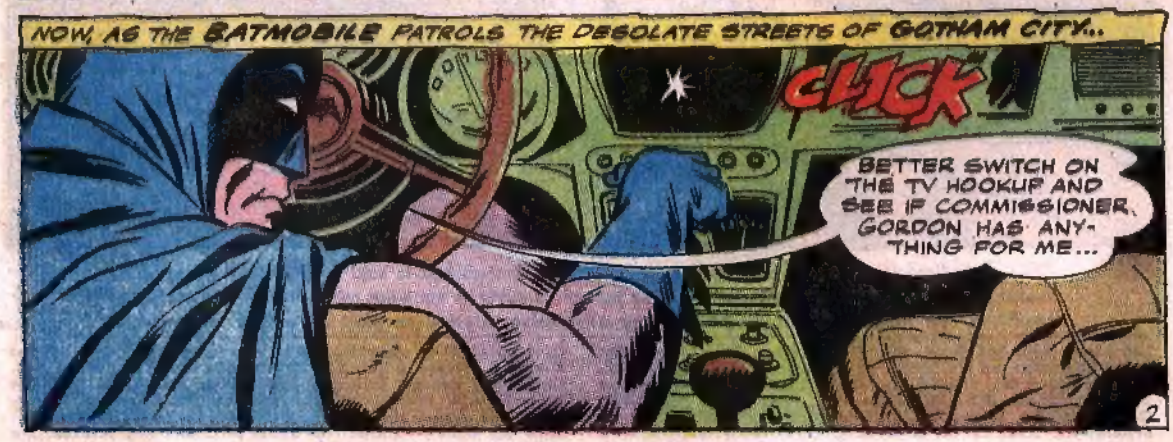
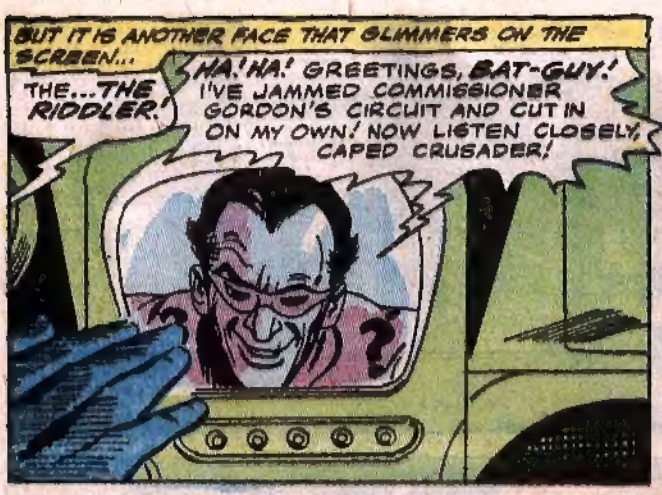
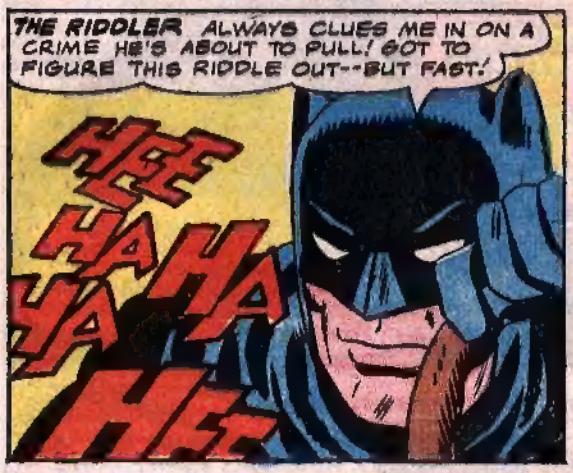

THIS IS WAYNE MANSION, HOME OF THE MOST FAMOUS HERO OF 'EM ALL...
TIME FOR MY PATROL...
THIS IS A CLOSET IN THE HOME OF THE MOST FAMOUS HERO!
IT'S NIGHT-- AND THE TWO-LEGGED BEASTS IN THE CRIME JUNGLE WON'T WAIT! THEY'RE ON THE PROWL-- NOW!
THIS IS A FAMOUS COSTUME IN THE CLOSET OF THE MOST FAMOUS HERO!
WITH ROBIN AWAY ON A TEEN TITANS MISSION, I'LL HAVE TO OPERATE SOLO!
THIS IS A SECRET DOOR IN THE HOME OF THE MOST FAMOUS HERO...
WONDER WHAT'S LYING IN WAIT IN THE CONCRETE JUNGLE OF GOTHAM CITY TONIGHT!

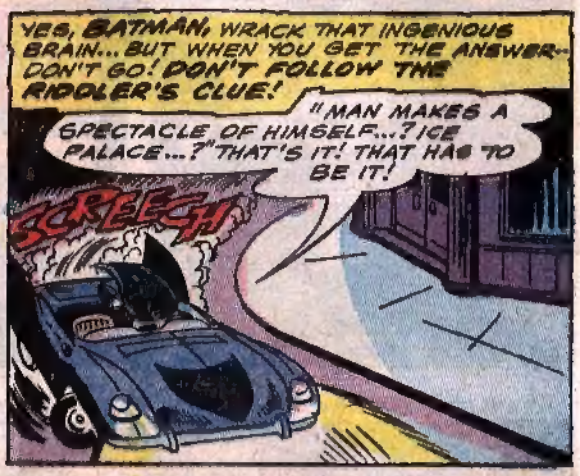

WAIT! HOLD IT, BATMAN! DON'T GO OUT INTO THE NAKED NIGHT--NOT TONIGHT! OHH-H-H... TOO LATE!
WOOM

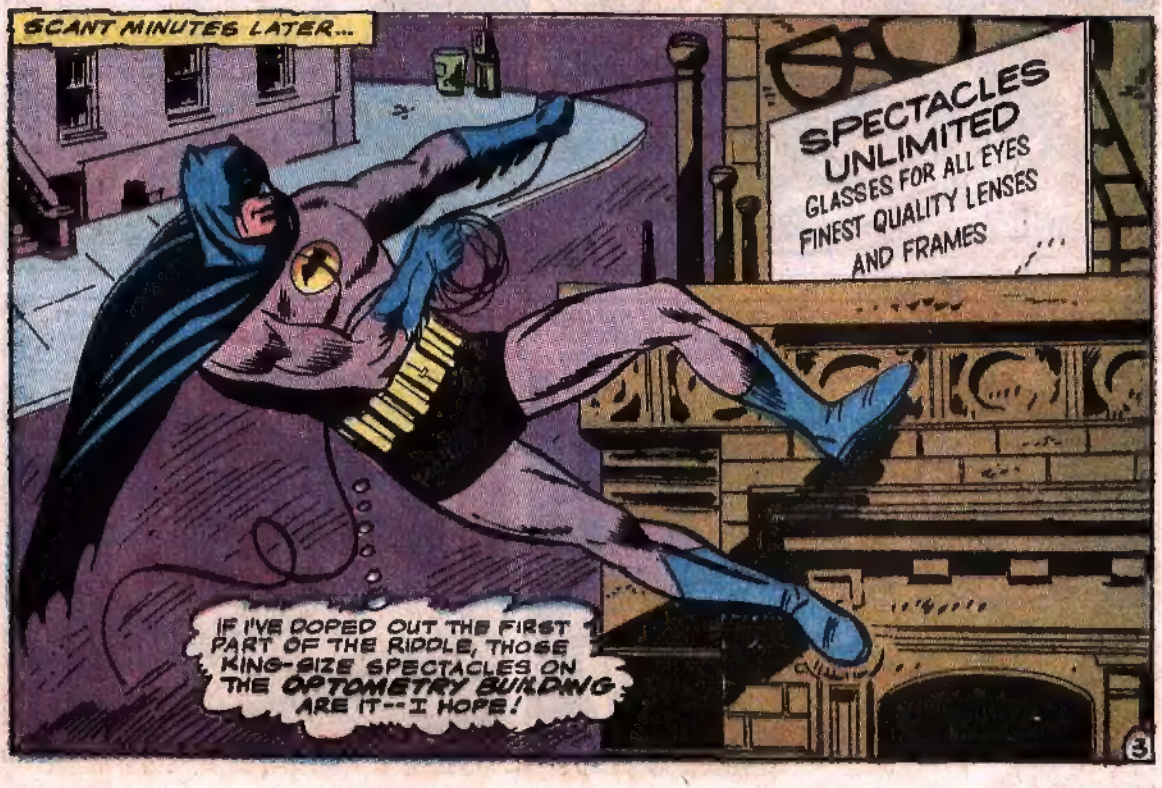

NOW, AS THE BATMOBILE PATROLS THE DESOLATE STREETS OF GOTHAM CITY...
CLICK
BETTER SWITCH ON THE TV HOOKUP AND SEE IF COMMISSIONER GORDON HAS ANYTHING FOR ME...

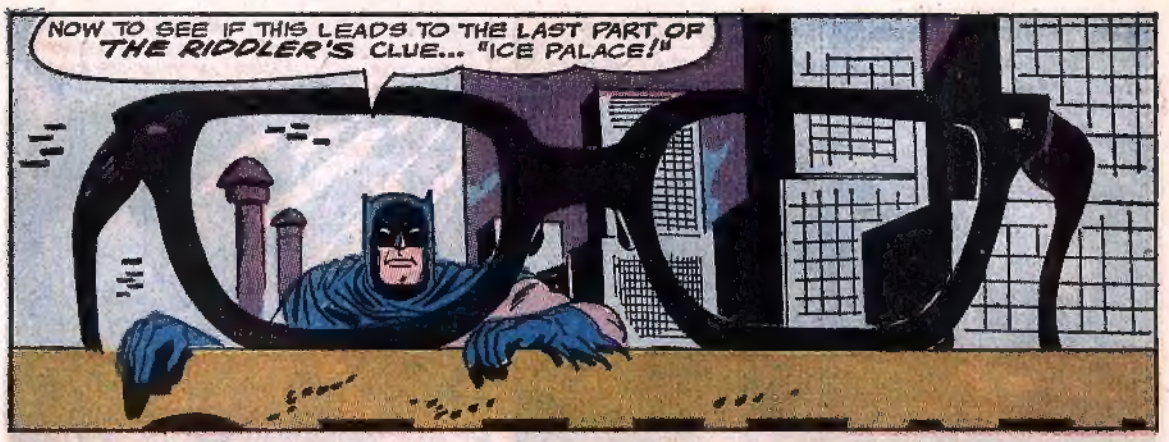

BUT IT IS ANOTHER FACE THAT GLIMMERS ON THE SCREEN...
THE...THE RIDDLER!
HA! HA! GREETINGS, BAT-GUY! I'VE JAMMED COMMISSIONER GORDON'S CIRCUIT AND CUT IN ON MY OWN! NOW LISTEN CLOSELY, CAPED CRUSADER!

RIDDLE ME THIS... "IF A MAN MAKES A SPECTACLE OF HIMSELF, WHAT CRIMES WILL LURK IN THE HEART OF THE ICE PALACE?"
HA! HA! HEE! HEEEE!

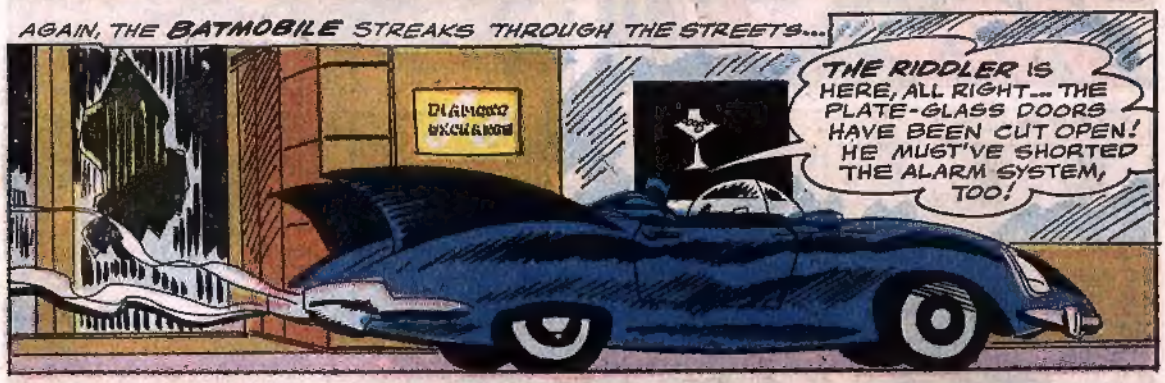

THE RIDDLER ALWAYS CLUES ME IN ON A CRIME HE'S ABOUT TO PULL! GOT TO FIGURE THIS RIDDLE OUT--BUT FAST!
HEE HA HA HA HEE

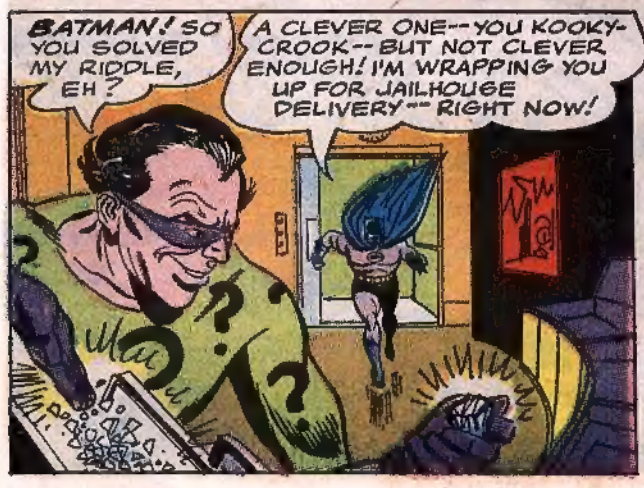

YES, BATMAN, WRACK THAT INGENIOUS BRAIN... BUT WHEN YOU GET THE ANSWER--DON'T GO! DON'T FOLLOW THE RIDDLER'S CLUE!
"MAN MAKES A SPECTACLE OF HIMSELF...? ICE PALACE...?" THAT'S IT! THAT HAS TO BE IT!
SCREECH!

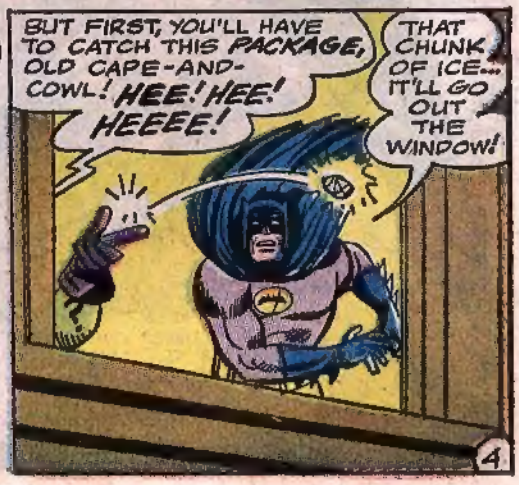

SCANT MINUTES LATER...
SPECTACLES UNLIMITED
GLASSES FOR ALL EYES
FINEST QUALITY LENSES AND FRAMES
IF I'VE DOPED OUT THE FIRST PART OF THE RIDDLE, THOSE KING-SIZE SPECTACLES ON THE OPTOMETRY BUILDING ARE IT--I HOPE!


NOW TO SEE IF THIS LEADS TO THE LAST PART OF THE RIDDLER'S CLUE... "ICE PALACE!"

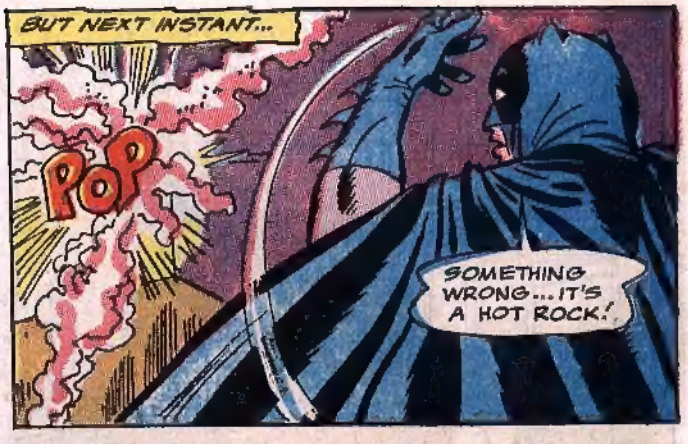
DIAMOND EXCHANGE
NOTHING--JUST THE DIAMOND EXCHANGE! I... WAIT!... OF COURSE! DIAMONDS ARE "ICE" IN UNDERWORLD LINGO! DIAMOND EXCHANGE... ICE PALACE! WHAT ELSE?


AGAIN, THE BATMOBILE STREAKS THROUGH THE STREETS...
THE RIDDLER IS HERE, ALL RIGHT... THE PLATE-GLASS DOORS HAVE BEEN CUT OPEN! HE MUST'VE SHORTED THE ALARM SYSTEM, TOO!


BATMAN! SO YOU SOLVED MY RIDDLE, EH?
A CLEVER ONE--YOU KOOKY-CROOK--BUT NOT CLEVER ENOUGH! I'M WRAPPING YOU UP FOR JAILHOUSE DELIVERY--RIGHT NOW!

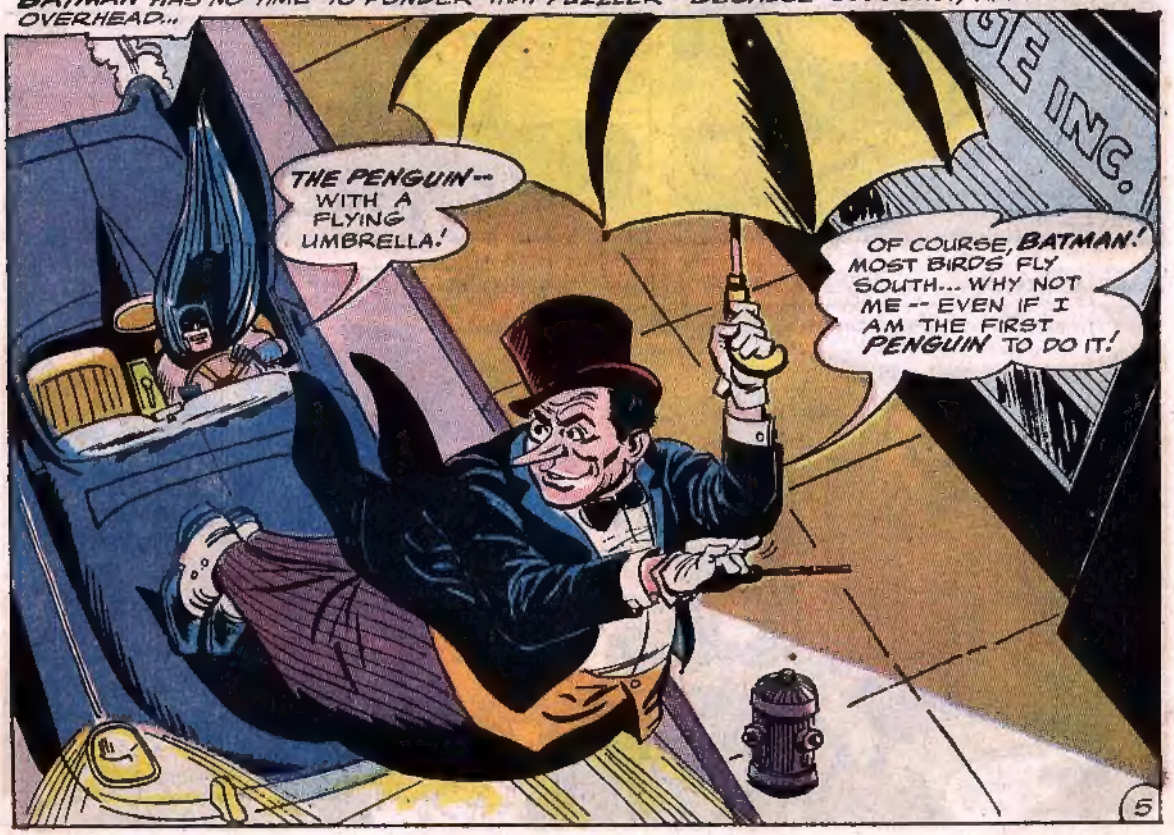

BUT FIRST, YOU'LL HAVE TO CATCH THIS PACKAGE, OLD CAPE-AND-COWL! HEE! HEE! HEEEE!
THAT CHUNK OF ICE... IT'LL GO OUT THE WINDOW!

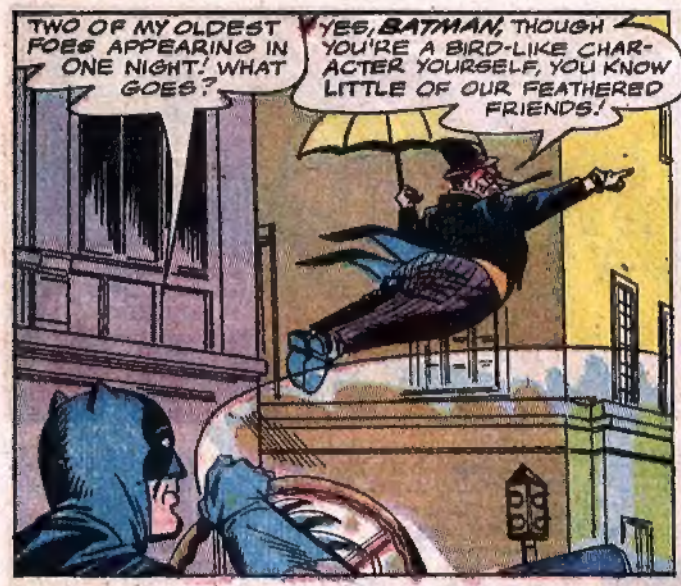
WITH A LIGHTNING STAB OF ONE GAUNTLETED HAND...


BUT NEXT INSTANT...
POP
SOMETHING WRONG... IT'S A HOT ROCK!

WHAT GIVES HERE? IT WAS A PHONY DIAMOND... A BOOBY-TRAP WITH SOME GAS IN IT! LUCKY I FELT IT HEATING UP IN MY HAND! BUT WHY? WHY THE ELABORATE GIMMICK TO KNOCK ME OFF?
HEE HEE HEE HA

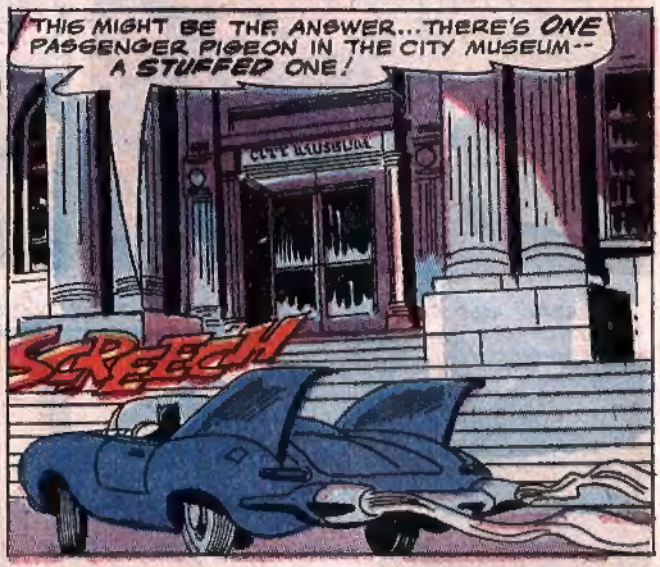
THE ANSWER TO THAT KING-SIZE RIDDLE, BATMAN, LIES IN THE RIDDLER'S LAUGHTER -- AND WHAT IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN NEXT...
THE POLICE HAVE SECURED THE DIAMOND EXCHANGE FOR THE NIGHT-- BUT THE RIDDLER GOT CLEAN AWAY!
JUST WHAT WAS HE UP TO?

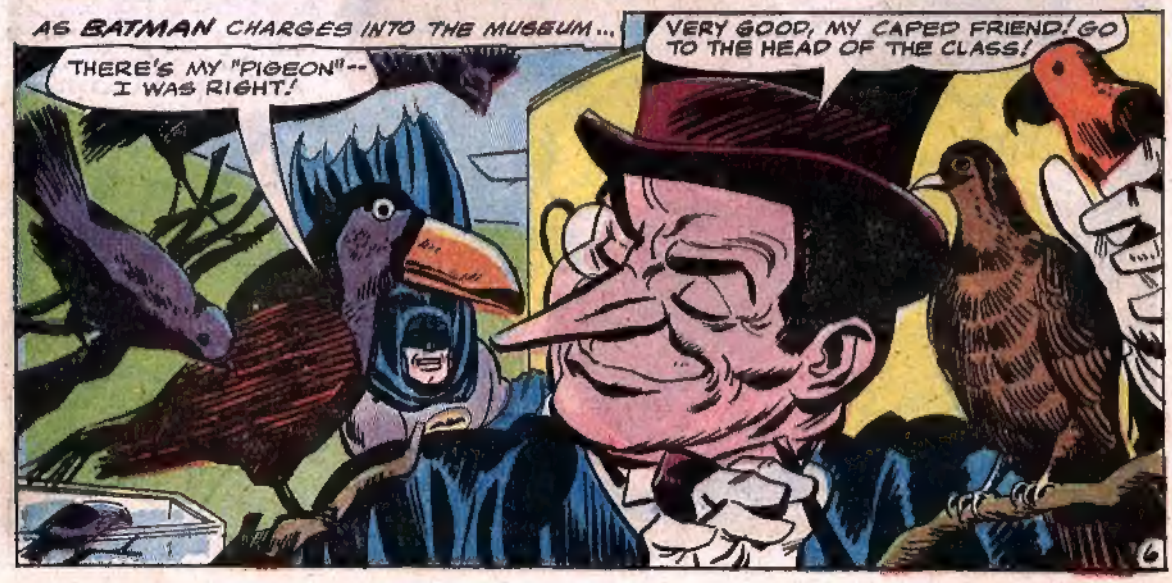

BATMAN HAS NO TIME TO PONDER THAT PUZZLER -- BECAUSE SUDDENLY, APPEARING OVERHEAD...
THE PENGUIN -- WITH A FLYING UMBRELLA!
OF COURSE, BATMAN! MOST BIRDS FLY SOUTH... WHY NOT ME -- EVEN IF I AM THE FIRST PENGUIN TO DO IT!
GE INC.

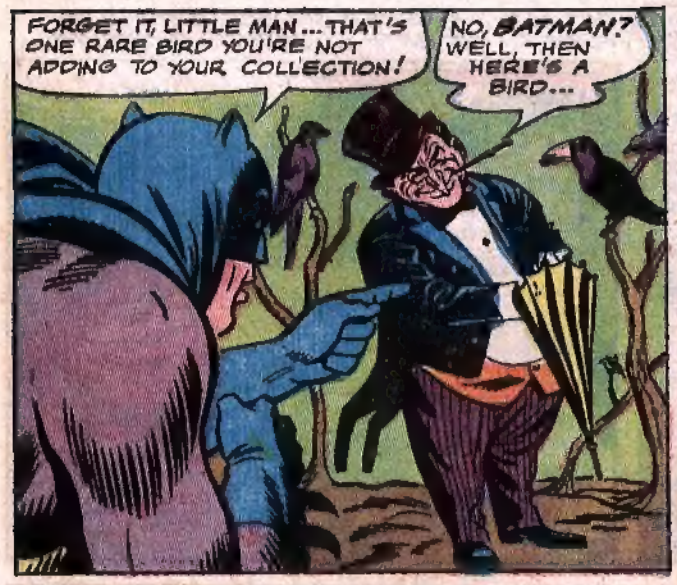

TWO OF MY OLDEST FOES APPEARING IN ONE NIGHT! WHAT GOES?
YES, BATMAN, THOUGH YOU'RE A BIRD-LIKE CHARACTER YOURSELF, YOU KNOW LITTLE OF OUR FEATHERED FRIENDS!

FOR INSTANCE, YOU PROBABLY THINK THERE ARE NO PASSENGER PIGEONS IN GOTHAM CITY! YOU ARE WRONG! TA-TA FOR NOW!
HE'S CUTTING ACROSS THE ROOFTOPS... CAN'T FOLLOW HIM...

THE PENGUIN NEVER SHOWS OFF HIS BIRD LORE UNLESS IT RELATES TO HIS CRIMES! BUT THERE REALLY AREN'T ANY PASSENGER PIGEONS IN GOTHAM... THE SPECIES HAS BEEN EXTINCT SINCE 1913!
SNAP


THIS MIGHT BE THE ANSWER... THERE'S ONE PASSENGER PIGEON IN THE CITY MUSEUM-- A STUFFED ONE!
CITY MUSEUM
SCREECH

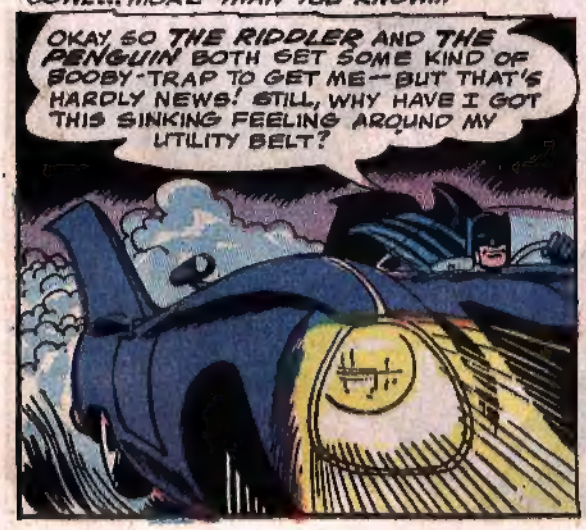

AS BATMAN CHARGES INTO THE MUSEUM...
THERE'S MY "PIGEON"-- I WAS RIGHT!
VERY GOOD, MY CAPED FRIEND! GO TO THE HEAD OF THE CLASS!


FORGET IT, LITTLE MAN... THAT'S ONE RARE BIRD YOU'RE NOT ADDING TO YOUR COLLECTION!
NO, BATMAN? WELL, THEN HERE'S A BIRD...

...FOR YOUR COLLECTION! CAW! CAW!
A CROW... SOMETHING FLYING FROM ITS FEATHERS! DUST--?
WHAP

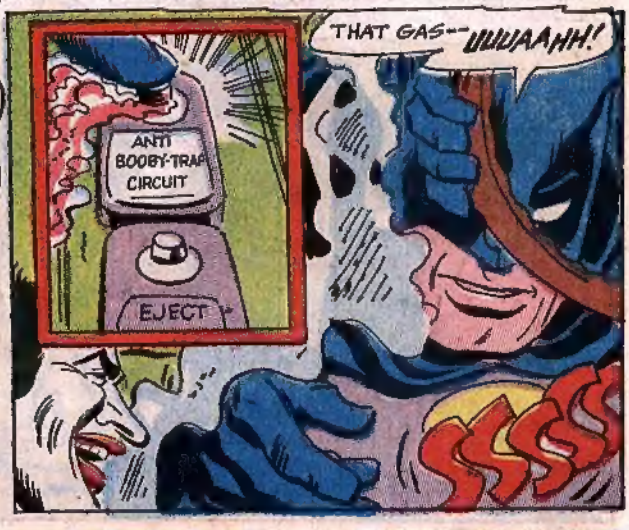
A LITTLE BIRD TELLS ME I'D BETTER KEEP CLEAR OF THAT STUFF!
I'D BEST FLY MYSELF.. BEFORE BATMAN GETS BACK INTO ACTION!

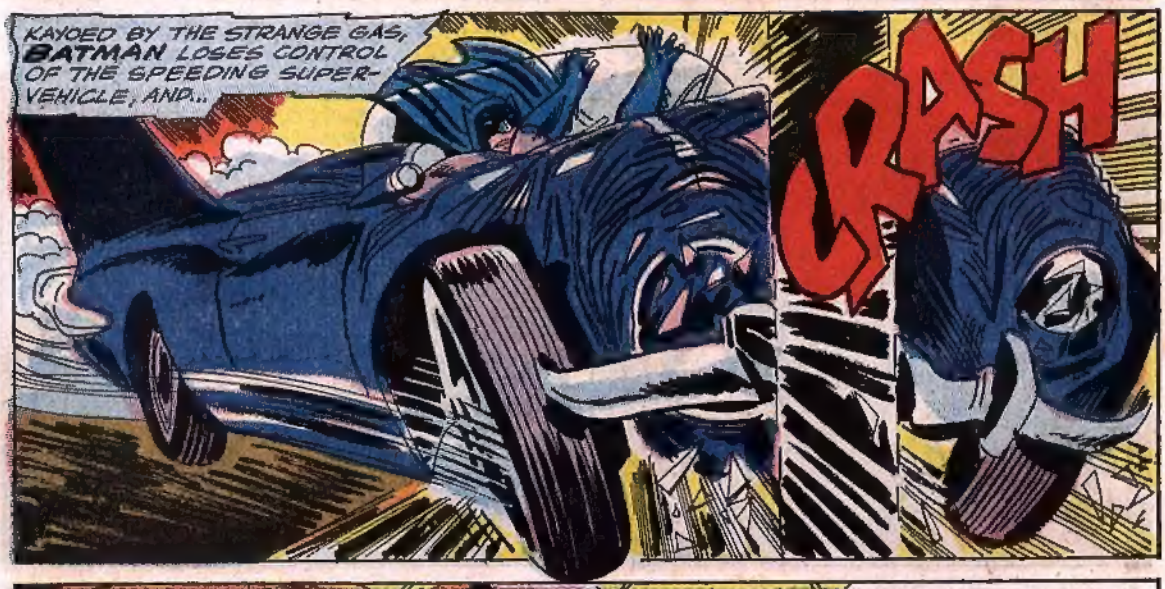
MOMENTS LATER, AS THE SENIOR HALF OF THE DYNAMIC DUO EXITS FROM THE MUSEUM...
THE PENGUIN-- HE'S GONE! THAT'S THE SECOND ARCH-FOE OF MINE WHO APPEARED TONIGHT! SOMETHING'S COOKING-- AND IT'S NOT BLACKBIRD PIE!


YOU'RE RIGHT THERE, OLD CAPE-AND-COWL... MORE THAN YOU KNOW...
OKAY, SO THE RIDDLER AND THE PENGUIN BOTH GET SOME KIND OF BOOBY-TRAP TO GET ME-- BUT THAT'S HARDLY NEWS! STILL, WHY HAVE I GOT THIS SINKING FEELING AROUND MY UTILITY BELT?

SUDDENLY...
THE GEAR SHIFT KNOB... THE JOKER!
CORRECT, BATMAN! MY LITTLE PRACTICAL JOKE... HA! HA! HA! YOU HEAR MY VOICE BY PRE-TIMED MINIATURE TAPE-RECORDING INSIDE, ACTIVATED BY YOUR SHIFTING THE GEARS!

BUT THAT ALSO ACTIVATED ANOTHER LITTLE PRACTICAL JOKE OF MINE WHICH, IN EXACTLY TEN SECONDS, WILL DESTROY THE BAT-MOBILE--AND YOU! YOU'LL DIE LAUGHING-- HA! HA!
YOU SHOULD KNOW BETTER, JOKER! THE BAT-BUGGY'S EQUIPPED FOR THAT! I'LL JUST EJECT MYSELF AND WATCH YOUR BOOBY-TRAP GET SQUELCHED!


BUT AS THE MASKED MANHUNTER'S HAND FLIPS ON THE ANTI-BOOBY-TRAP CIRCUIT...
ANTI BOOBY-TRAP CIRCUIT
EJECT
THAT GAS--UUUAAHH!


KAYOED BY THE STRANGE GAS, BATMAN LOSES CONTROL OF THE SPEEDING SUPER-VEHICLE, AND..
CRASH

I TOLD YOU YOU'D "DIE" LAUGHING, BATMAN!
HA! HA! HA!
AND WE'RE TELLING YOU YOU'LL DIE HAPPY, IF YOU ONLY MAKE SURE YOU READ PART TWO WHICH CONTINUES ON 2nd PAGE FOLLOWING!

# PART 2
# ALIAS THE BAT-HULK

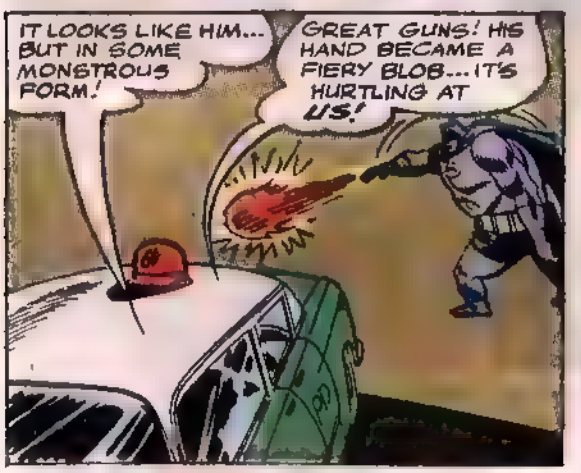
NOW, AMID THE WRECKAGE OF THE BATMOBILE, A FAMED FIGURE SPRAWLS UNCONSCIOUS... BUT FROM HIS LIPS, EERIE LAUGHTER SPILLS INTO THE NIGHT AIR OF GOTHAM CITY!

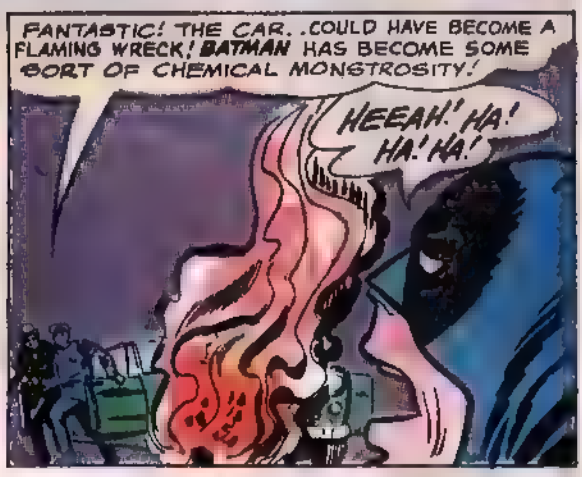
THEN, AS ONLY THE SILENT STREETS ARE WITNESS, THE NEWBORN THING THAT WAS BATMAN STAGGERS UPRIGHT, LURCHES FORWARD, AND WITH HANDS TURNED MOLTEN HOT, SEIZES THE THICK WOODEN POLE THAT HAS WRECKED THE BATMOBILE...

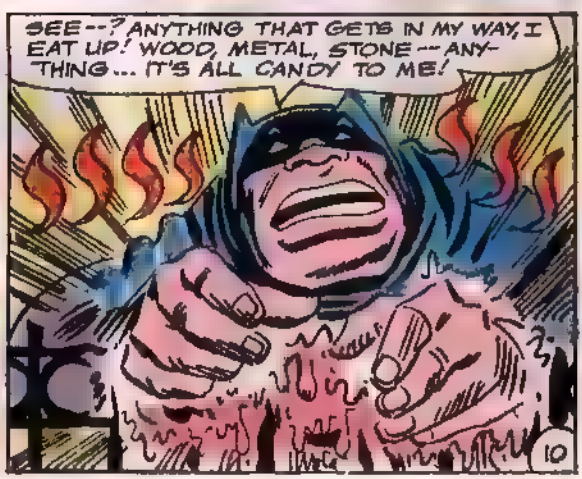
THEN, AS IF SATISFIED WITH DESTROYING THE THING THAT HAS DESTROYED HIS VEHICLE, BAT-HULK STALKS OFF INTO THE NIGHT...

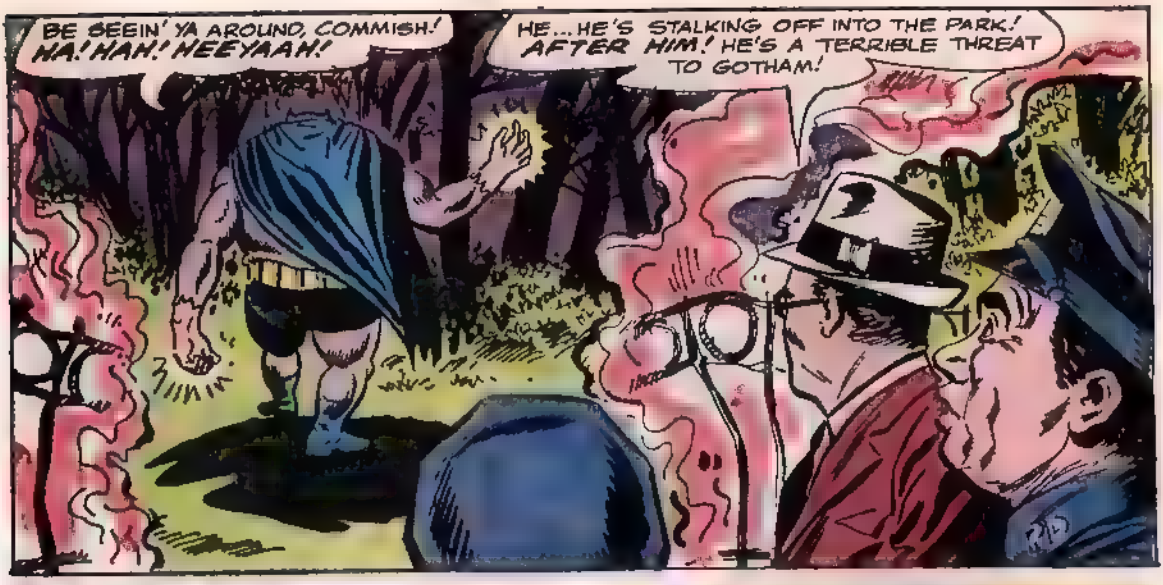
COMMISSIONER GORDON...IT'S BATMAN!

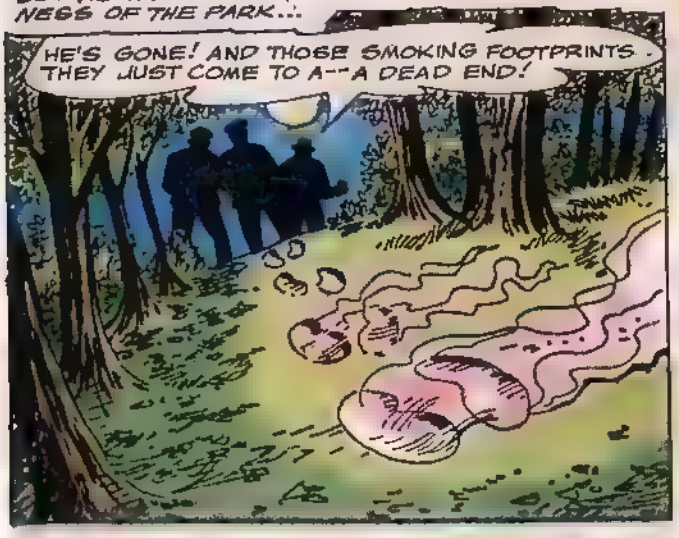
STOP! I WANT TO HAVE A TALK WITH...GOOD HEAVENS! THAT ISN'T BATMAN... OR IS IT!

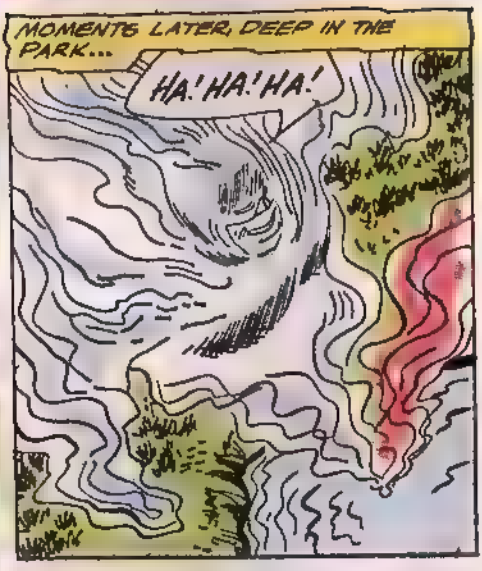


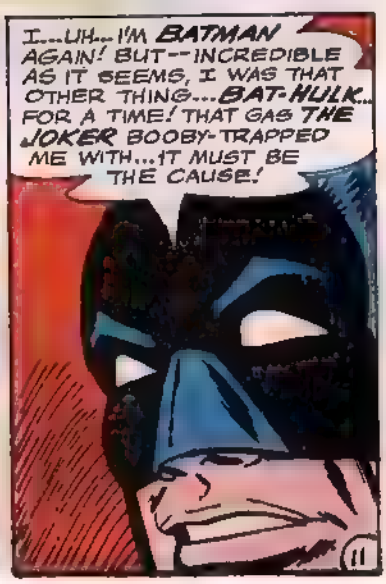


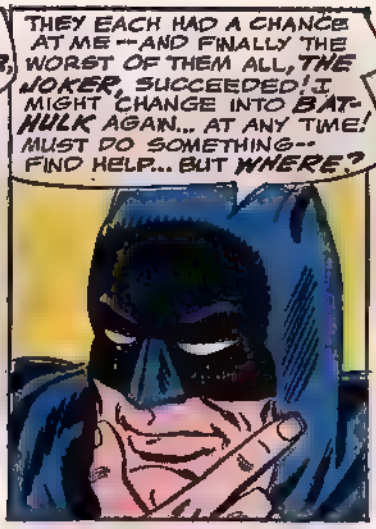

BE SEEIN' YA AROUND, COMMISH! HA! HAH! HEEYAAH!
HE... HE'S STALKING OFF INTO THE PARK! AFTER HIM! HE'S A TERRIBLE THREAT TO GOTHAM!

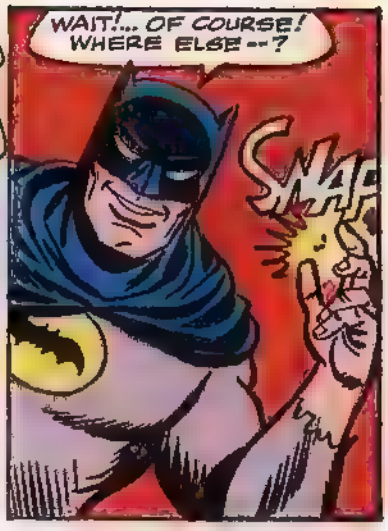

BUT AS THE AWED POLICE PURSUE INTO THE DIMNESS OF THE PARK...
HE'S GONE! AND THOSE SMOKING FOOTPRINTS - THEY JUST COME TO A--A DEAD END!


MOMENTS LATER, DEEP IN THE PARK...
HA! HA! HA!

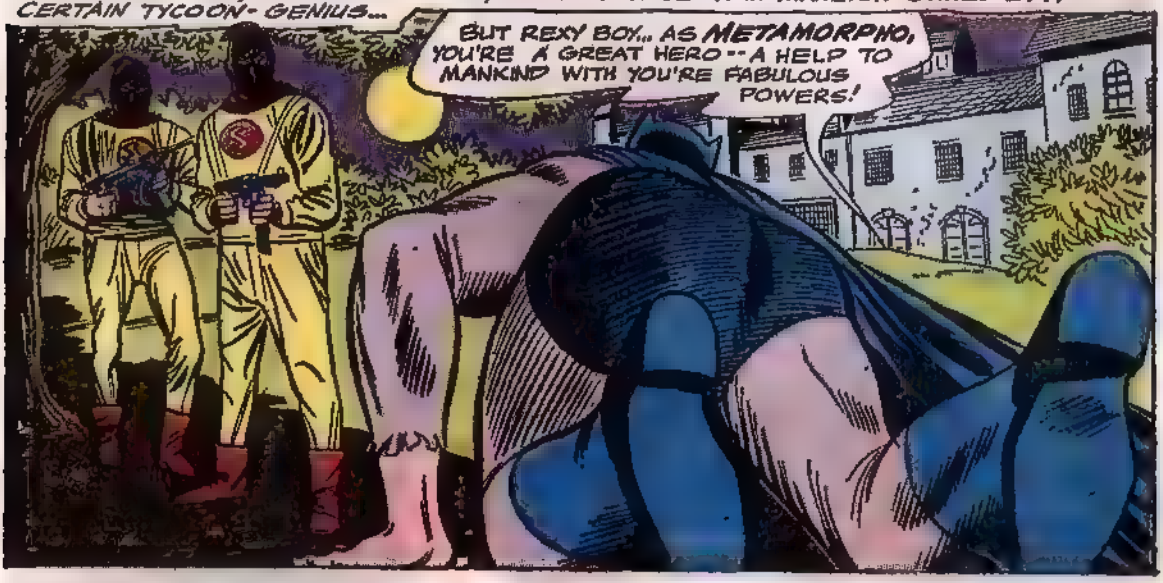
NOW I'LL... UNH! HEY WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME--?


I...UH... I'M BATMAN AGAIN! BUT--INCREDIBLE AS IT SEEMS, I WAS THAT OTHER THING... BAT-HULK... FOR A TIME! THAT GAS THE JOKER BOOBY-TRAPPED ME WITH... IT MUST BE THE CAUSE!

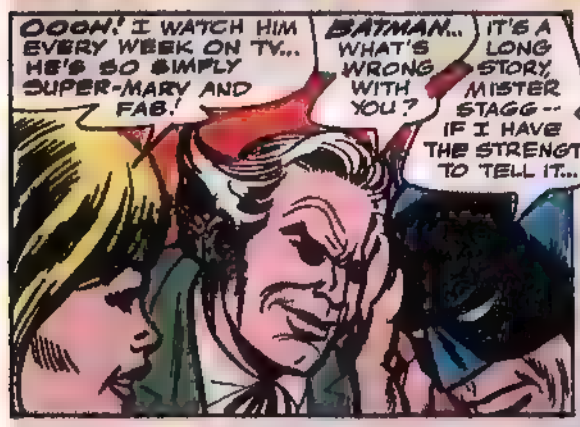


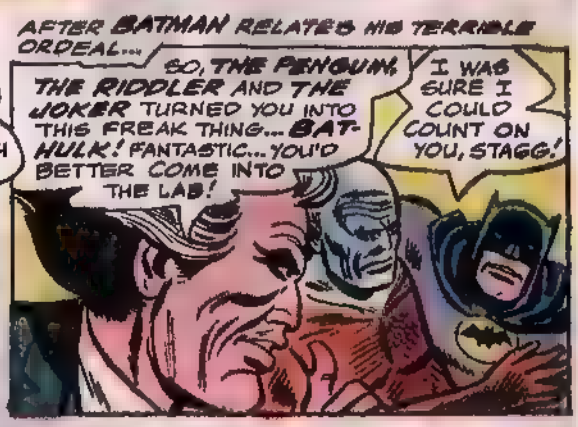



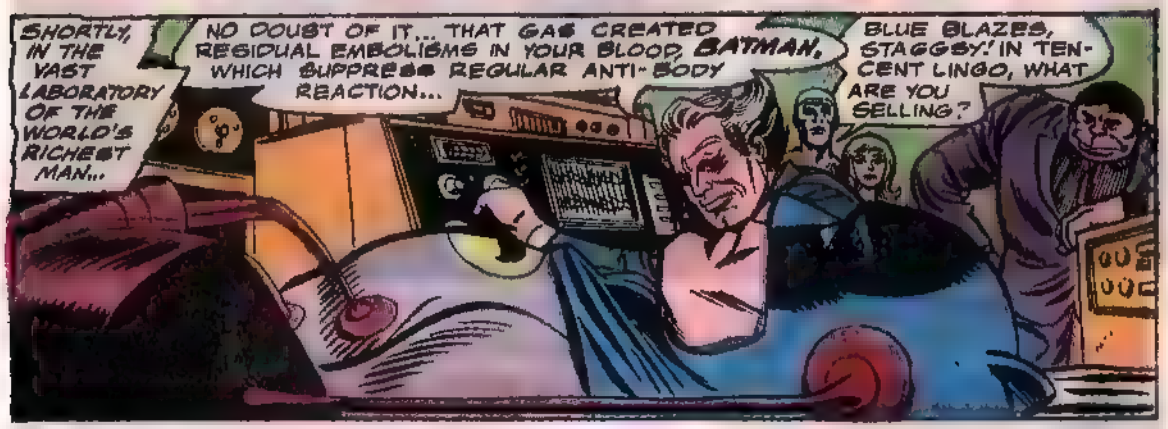

SOME TIME LATER, MANY MILES AWAY, OUTSIDE A CERTAIN MANSION OWNED BY A CERTAIN TYCOON-GENIUS...

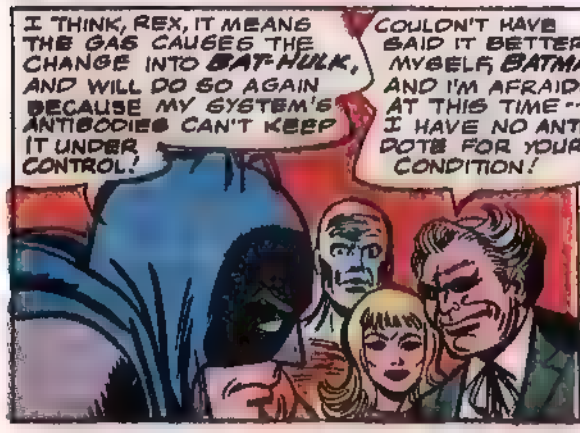


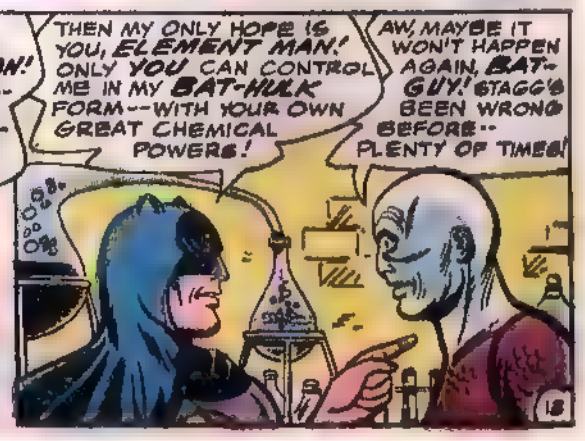
MISTER STAGG! WE FOUND HIM CRAWLING INTO THE GROUNDS...
GREAT JASPER!... BATMAN!
HOLY BLUE HANNAH! OLD-CAPE-AND-COWL HIMSELF!


OOOH! I WATCH HIM EVERY WEEK ON TV... HE'S SO SIMPLY SUPER-MARY AND FAB!
BATMAN... WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?
IT'S A LONG STORY, MISTER STAGG -- IF I HAVE THE STRENGTH TO TELL IT...


AFTER BATMAN RELATES HIS TERRIBLE ORDEAL...
SO, THE PENGUIN, THE RIDDLER AND THE JOKER TURNED YOU INTO THIS FREAK THING... BAT-HULK! FANTASTIC... YOU'D BETTER COME INTO THE LAB!
I WAS SURE I COULD COUNT ON YOU, STAGG!


SHORTLY, IN THE VAST LABORATORY OF THE WORLD'S RICHEST MAN...
NO DOUBT OF IT... THAT GAS CREATED RESIDUAL EMBOLISMS IN YOUR BLOOD, BATMAN, WHICH SUPPRESS REGULAR ANTI-BODY REACTION...
BLUE BLAZES, STAGGSY! IN TEN-CENT LINGO, WHAT ARE YOU SELLING?


I THINK, REX, IT MEANS THE GAS CAUSES THE CHANGE INTO BAT-HULK, AND WILL DO SO AGAIN BECAUSE MY SYSTEM'S ANTIBODIES CAN'T KEEP IT UNDER CONTROL!
COULDN'T HAVE SAID IT BETTER MYSELF, BATMAN! AND I'M AFRAID-- AT THIS TIME -- I HAVE NO ANTI-DOTE FOR YOUR CONDITION!


THEN MY ONLY HOPE IS YOU, ELEMENT MAN! ONLY YOU CAN CONTROL ME IN MY BAT-HULK FORM -- WITH YOUR OWN GREAT CHEMICAL POWERS!
AW, MAYBE IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN, BAT-GUY! STAGG'S BEEN WRONG BEFORE -- PLENTY OF TIMES!

PERHAPS, BUT... UHHHHH-- HEEEYAAAH! HA! HA!

BY GODFREY! BATMAN HE'S CHANGING... TURNING INTO...

BLAZES!... BAT-HULK!

HEEYAAAAH! YOU'RE IN MY WAY-- AND I BAT UP ANYTHING IN MY WAY!

G-GREAT JASPER! REX-DO SOMETHING!

NEVER FEAR, MASTER! JAVA, THE EVER-FAITHFUL, THE EVER-BRAVE, THE...

...EVER-STRONG... UUUULP!

HAW! HAW! I DON'T EVEN NEED TO USE MY CHEMICAL PHEEENOM POWERS ON THIS PUSHOVER!

EEYOW!

SPLASH

REX! DADDYKINS!

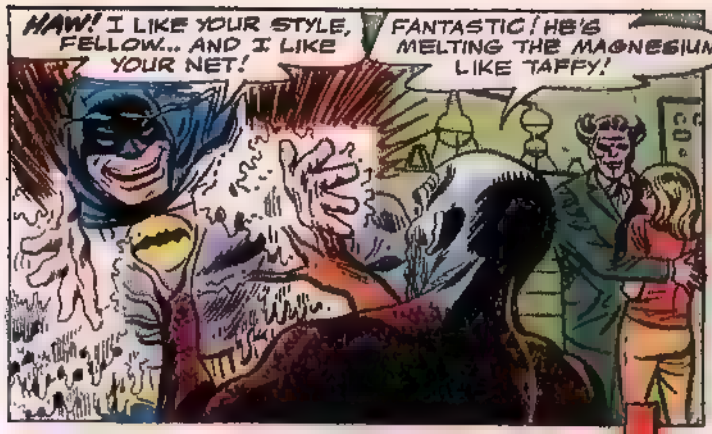
EASY, SAPPH, BABY... OLD HAIRY-EARS WAS JUST AN APPETIZER FOR THIS CREEP, BUT HE'LL GET REAL HEARTBURN TANGLING WITH ELEMENT MAN!

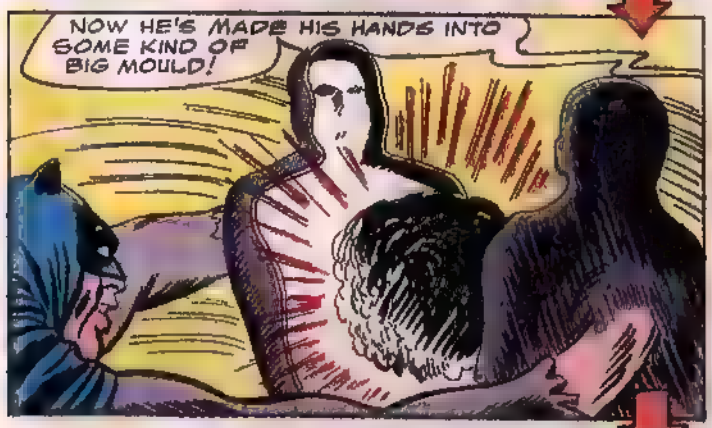
METAMORPHO VERSUS BAT-HULK! THE FABULOUS "MAN OF A THOUSAND CHANGES" PITTED AGAINST THIS NEWBORN TERROR! STAND BACK! GIVE 'EM ROOM!

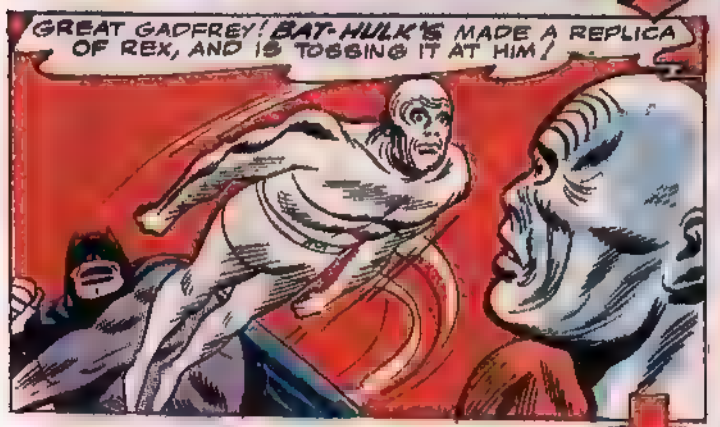
OKAY BUSTER, MEET THE CHAMP! FIRST, A HANDY-DANDY LITTLE MAGNESIUM MESH TO MUFFLE YOUR MALEVOLENCE!

HOO-BOY-- LISTEN TO ME!

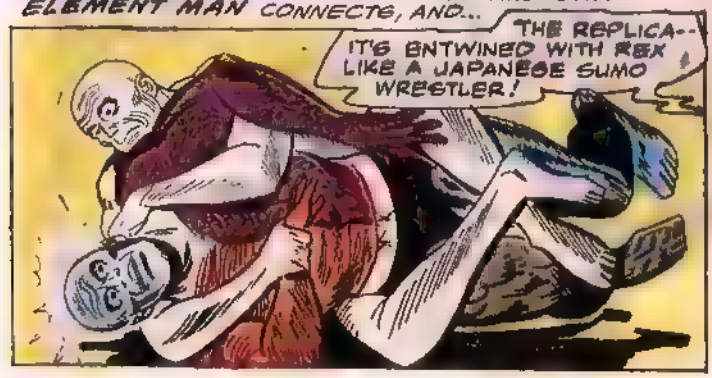
CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

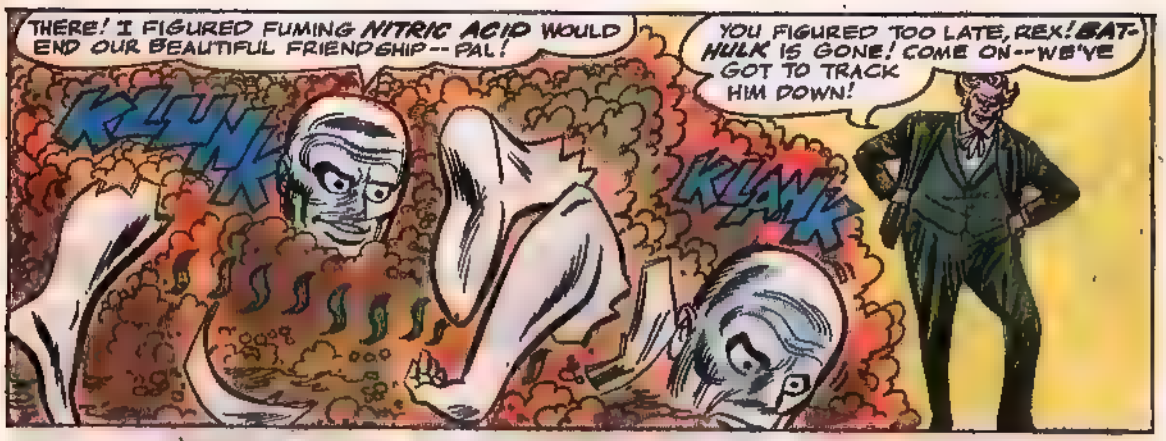


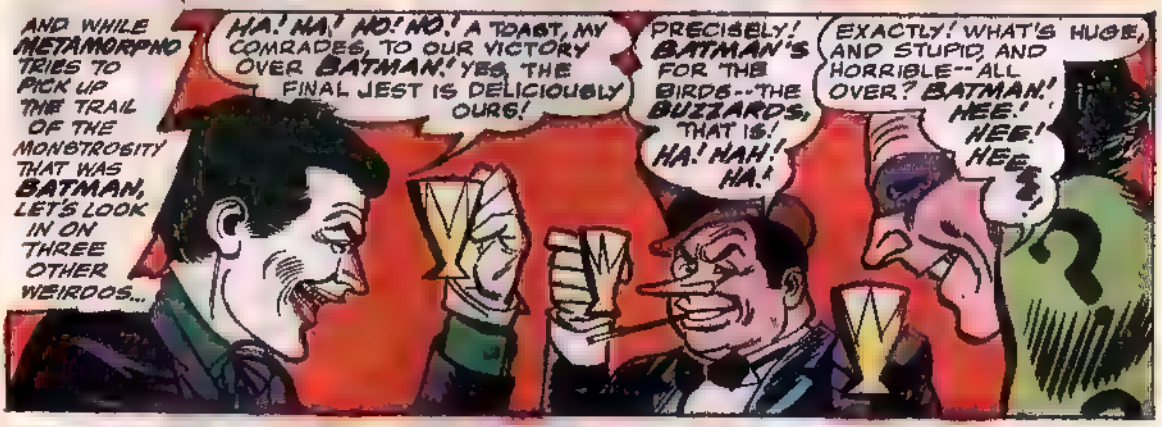



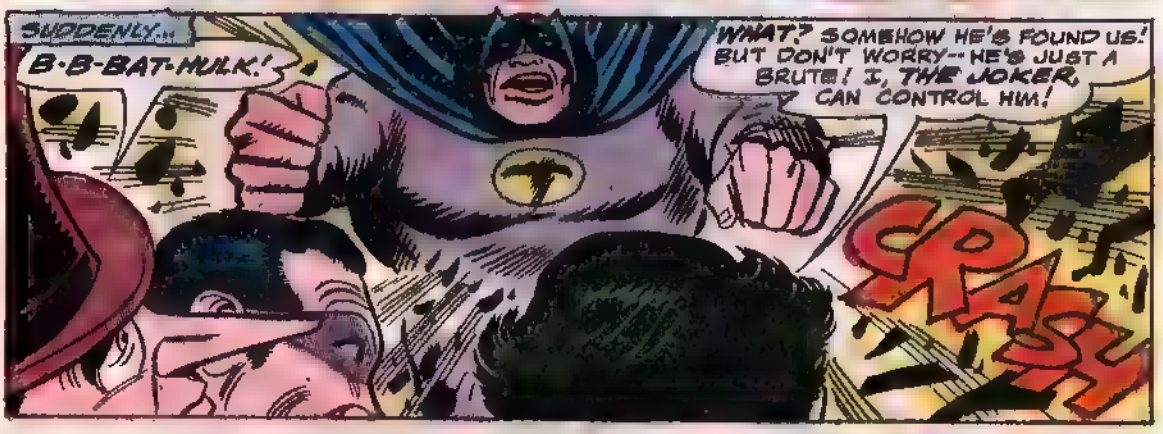



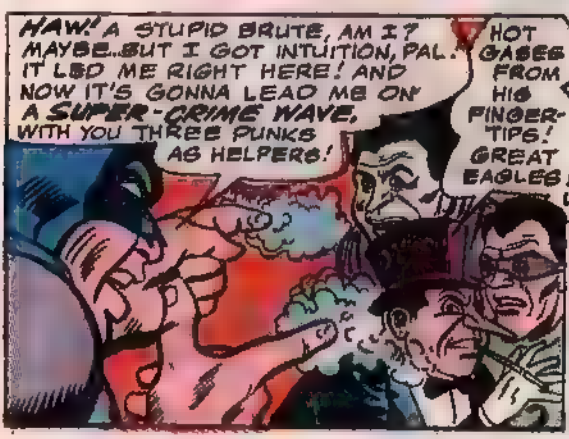

NEXT INSTANT, THE SUPER-STRONG, MOLDED MAGNESIUM DOUBLE OF THE WORLD'S ONE AND ONLY ELEMENT MAN CONNECTS, AND...

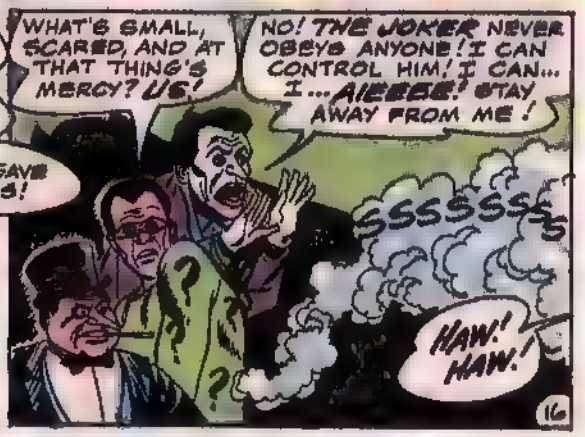



THERE! I FIGURED FUMING NITRIC ACID WOULD END OUR BEAUTIFUL FRIENDSHIP -- PAL!
YOU FIGURED TOO LATE, REX! BAT-HULK IS GONE! COME ON -- WE'VE GOT TO TRACK HIM DOWN!
KLUNK
KLAWK

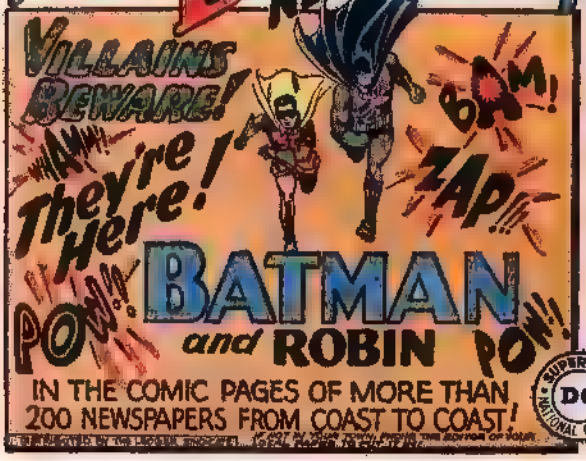

AND WHILE METAMORPHO TRIES TO PICK UP THE TRAIL OF THE MONSTROSITY THAT WAS BATMAN, LET'S LOOK IN ON THREE OTHER WEIRDOS...
HA! HA! HO! HO! A TOAST, MY COMRADES, TO OUR VICTORY OVER BATMAN! YES, THE FINAL JEST IS DELICIOUSLY OURS!
PRECISELY! BATMAN'S FOR THE BIRDS -- THE BUZZARDS, THAT IS! HA! HAH! HA!
EXACTLY! WHAT'S HUGE, AND STUPID, AND HORRIBLE -- ALL OVER? BATMAN! HEE! HEE! HEE!


SUDDENLY...
B-B-BAT-HULK!
WHAT? SOMEHOW HE'S FOUND US! BUT DON'T WORRY -- HE'S JUST A BRUTE! I, THE JOKER, CAN CONTROL HIM!
CRASH

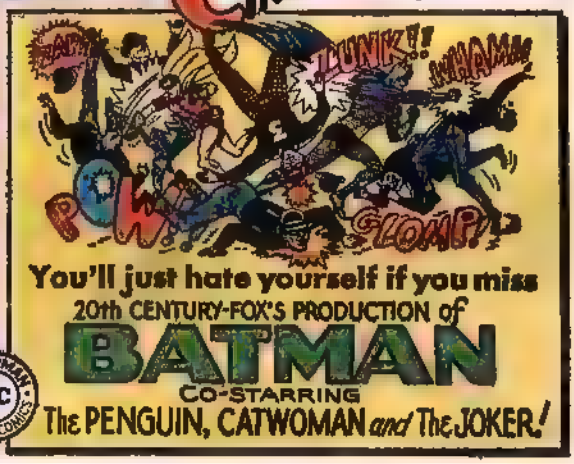

HAW! A STUPID BRUTE, AM I? MAYBE... BUT I GOT INTUITION, PAL. IT LED ME RIGHT HERE! AND NOW IT'S GONNA LEAD ME ON A SUPER-CRIME WAVE, WITH YOU THREE PUNKS AS HELPERS!
HOT GASES FROM HIS FINGER-TIPS! GREAT EAGLES SAVE US!


WHAT'S SMALL, SCARED, AND AT THAT THING'S MERCY? US!
NO! THE JOKER NEVER OBEYS ANYONE! I CAN CONTROL HIM! I CAN... I... AIEEEE! STAY AWAY FROM ME!
SSSSSSSS
HAW! HAW!

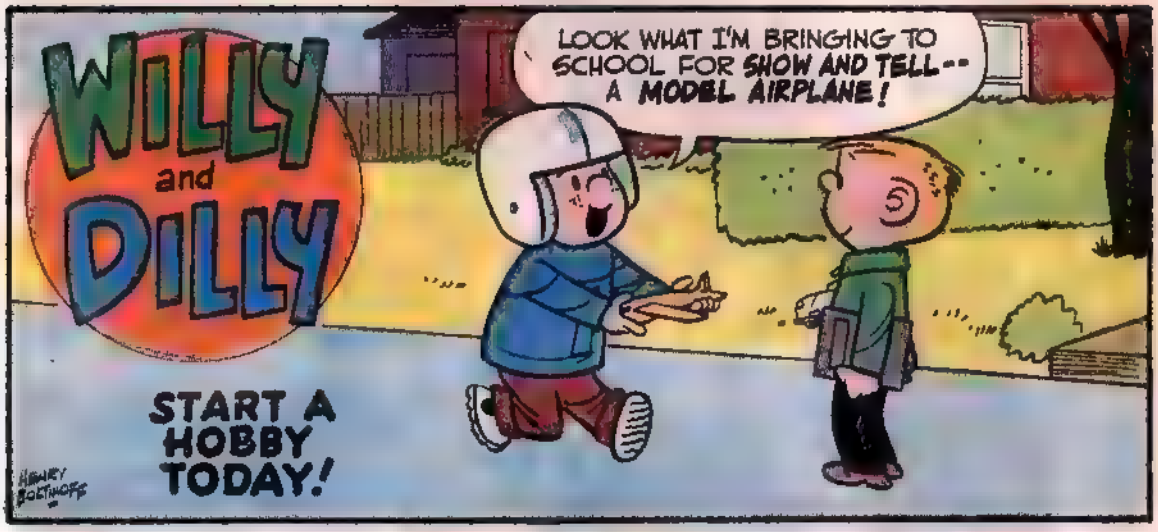
NOW--in your DAILY NEWSPAPER!

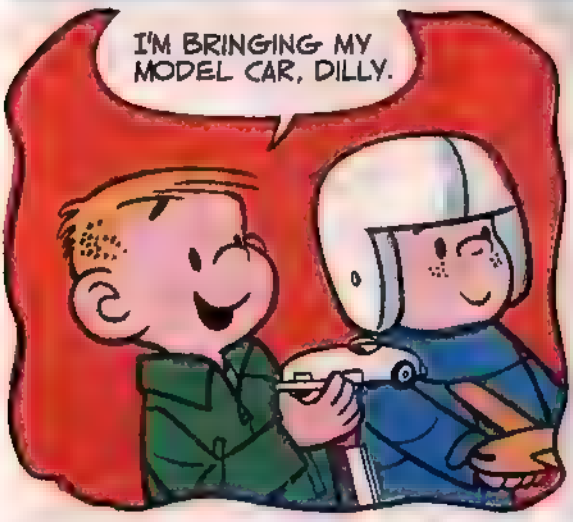


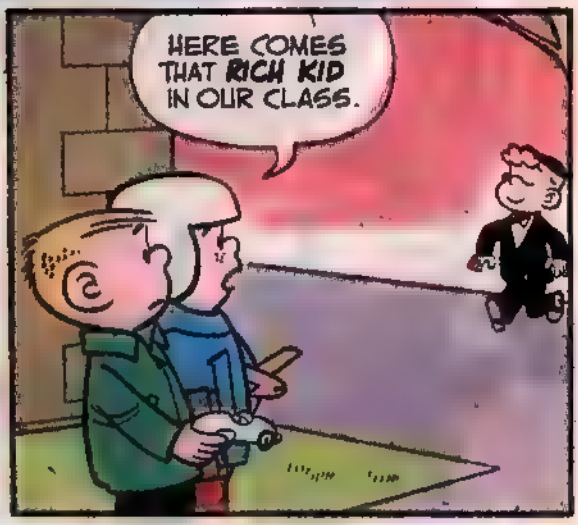

NOW--in COLOR and CINEMASCOPE!

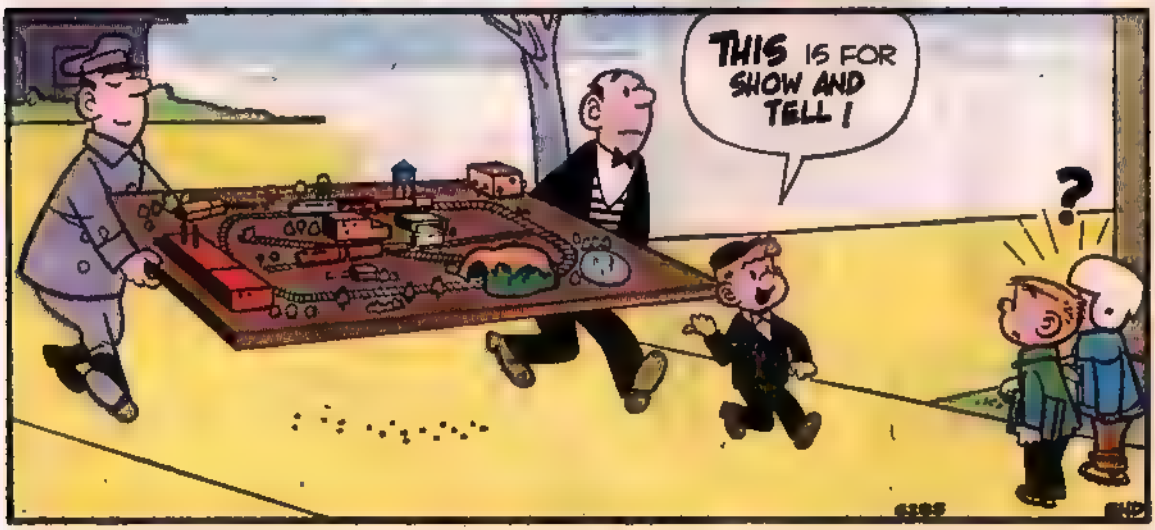



You'll just hate yourself if you miss
20th CENTURY-FOX'S PRODUCTION of
BATMAN
CO-STARRING
The PENGUIN, CATWOMAN and The JOKER!


WILLY and DILLY
START A HOBBY TODAY!
HENRY BOLTINOFF
LOOK WHAT I'M BRINGING TO SCHOOL FOR SHOW AND TELL-- A MODEL AIRPLANE!

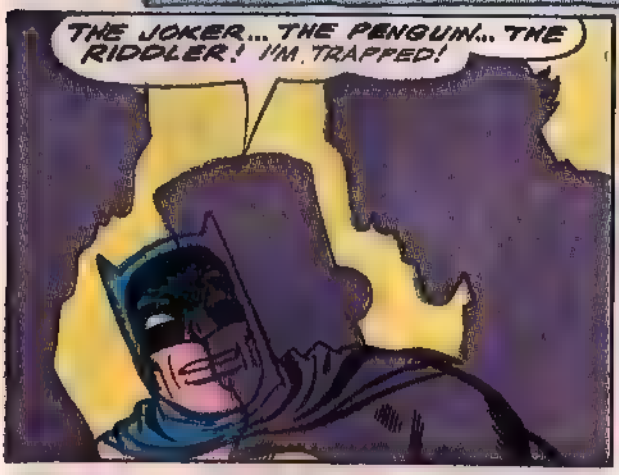

I'M BRINGING MY MODEL CAR, DILLY.

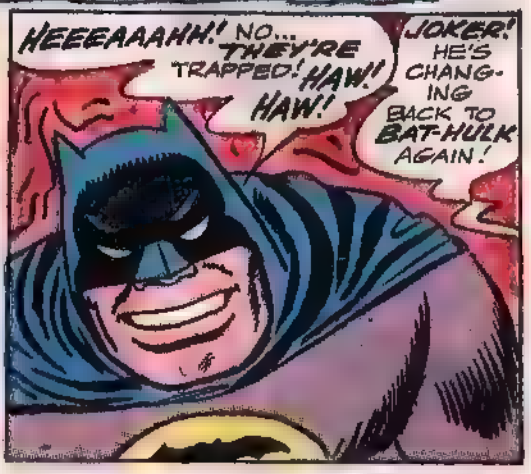

HERE COMES THAT RICH KID IN OUR CLASS.

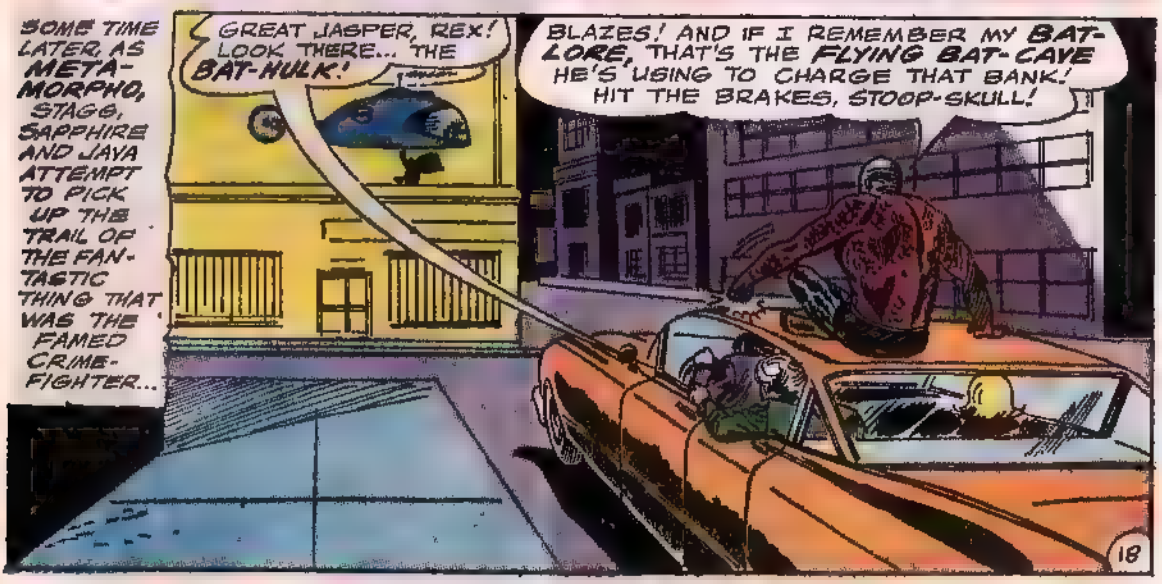

THIS IS FOR SHOW AND TELL!
?

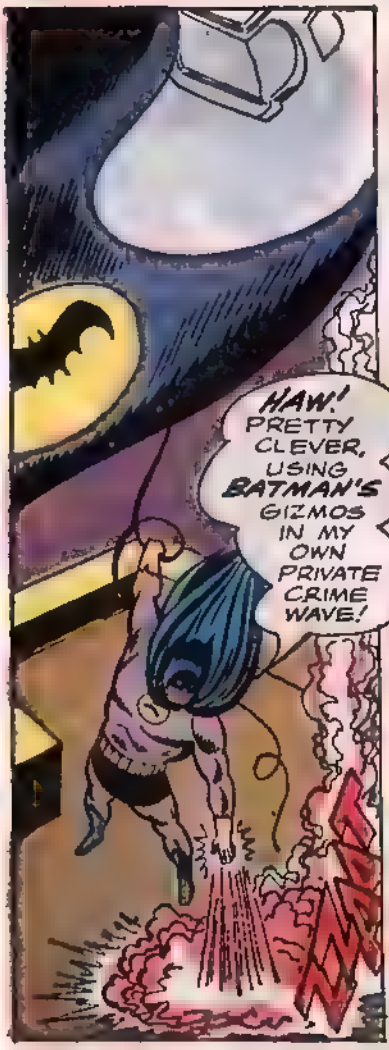
# PART 3
# ALIAS THE BAT-HULK

WE LEFT THE GOOD OLD **BAT-GUY** AS THE THREE KING-PINKS, WHO LOVE TO HATE THE **CAPED CRUSADER** THE MOST, CLOSED IN ON HIM! NOW, LET'S SEE WHAT'S HAPPENED SINCE...



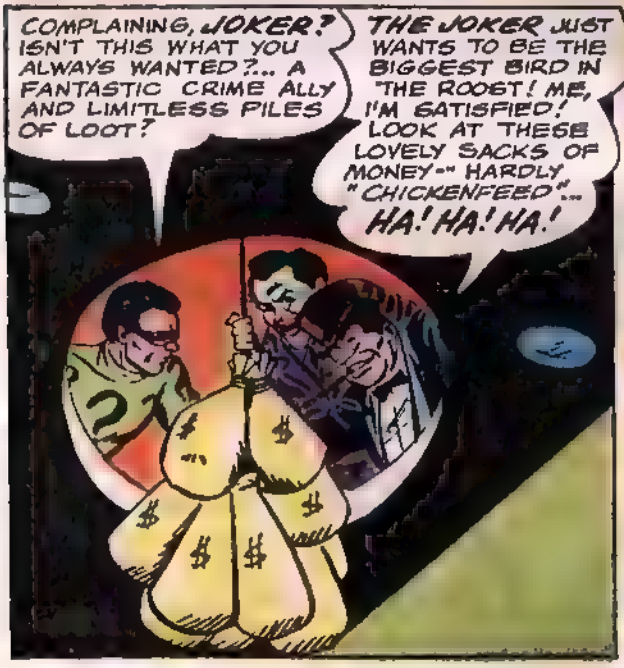



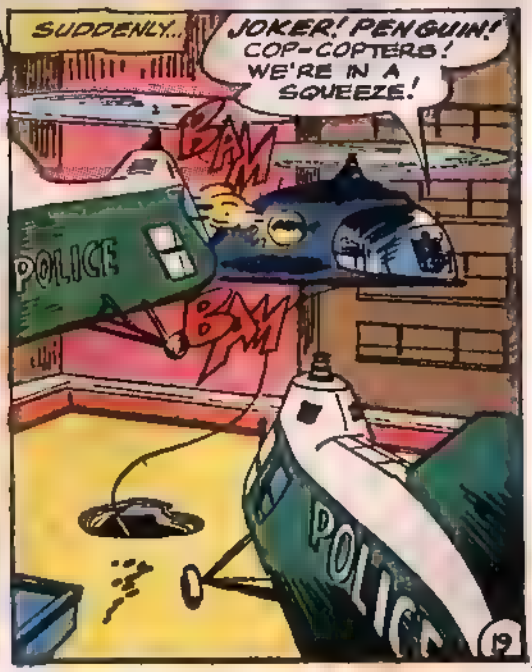



HAW! PRETTY CLEVER, USING BATMAN'S GIZMOS IN MY OWN PRIVATE CRIME WAVE!
ZZZAPP

YEAH, USIN' MY OWN TREEEMENDOUS CHEMICAL MUSCLE, IT'S A SNAP TO SEND THIS BOODLE UP TO THE FLYIN' BAT-CAVE...

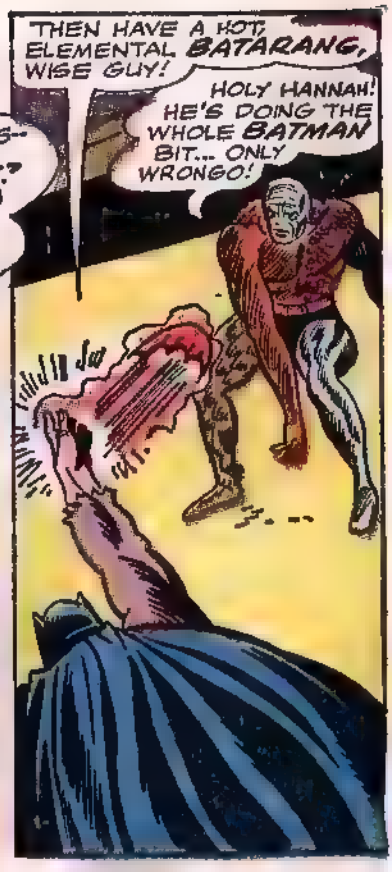
...WHERE MY THREE PALS STOW IT AWAY! HAW!
I DON'T LIKE THIS... WE'RE HELP-LESS TOOLS OF THAT MONSTER!


COMPLAINING, JOKER? ISN'T THIS WHAT YOU ALWAYS WANTED?... A FANTASTIC CRIME ALLY AND LIMITLESS PILES OF LOOT?
THE JOKER JUST WANTS TO BE THE BIGGEST BIRD IN THE ROOST! ME, I'M SATISFIED! LOOK AT THESE LOVELY SACKS OF MONEY-- HARDLY "CHICKENFEED"... HA! HA! HA!

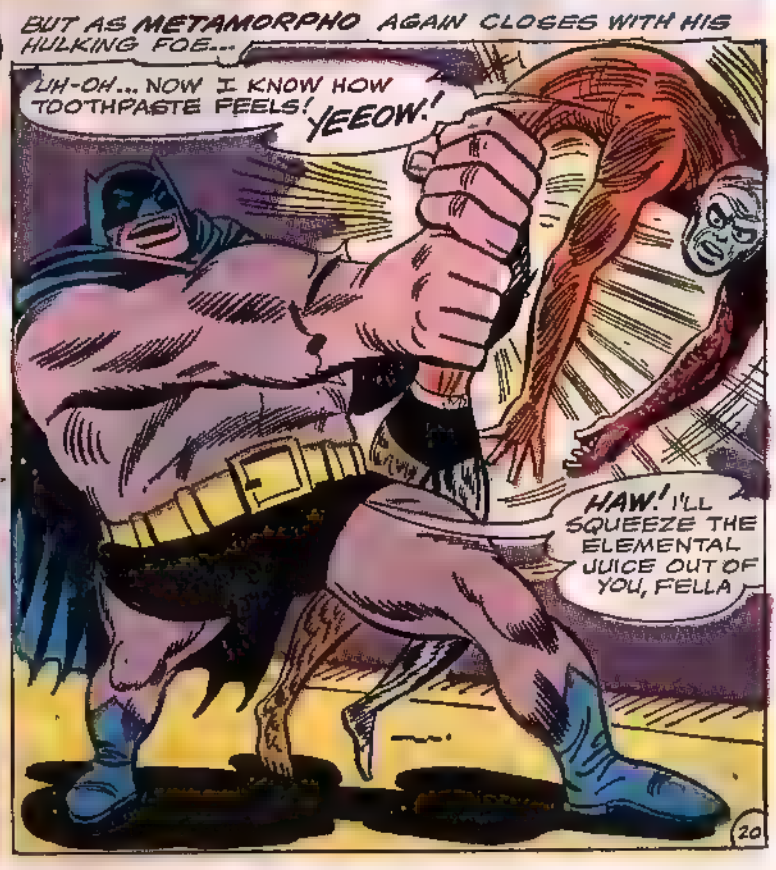

SUDDENLY...
JOKER! PENGUIN! COP-COPTERS! WE'RE IN A SQUEEZE!
BAM
BAM
POLICE
POLICE

I'VE CUT US LOOSE! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!
POLICE
WOOM

SECONDS LATER, AS INCREDIBLY POWERFUL HANDS PULL A MASSIVE FORM UP FROM THE BANK VAULT..
THOSE THREE FINKS-- THEY'VE GONE! THE ELEMENT GUY.' HAW! DIDN'T YA HAVE ENOUGH LAST TIME, FELLA?
I'LL BET YOU SAY THAT TO ALL YOUR FOES, CHUM!


THEN HAVE A HOT, ELEMENTAL BATARANG, WISE GUY!
HOLY HANNAH! HE'S DOING THE WHOLE BATMAN BIT... ONLY WRONGO!

BETTER MAKE WITH A POTASSIUM DETOUR-- OR I'LL CATCH IT IN THE NECK!


BUT AS METAMORPHO AGAIN CLOSES WITH HIS HULKING FOE...
UH-OH... NOW I KNOW HOW TOOTHPASTE FEELS! YEEOW!
HAW! I'LL SQUEEZE THE ELEMENTAL JUICE OUT OF YOU, FELLA

AS THE POWERFUL, DISSOLVING CHEMICAL PAWS OF THE **BAT-HULK** CLOSE EVER MORE TIGHTLY...

HAW!

THEY SAY TWO ARE BETTER THAN ONE--BUT LIKE WHO ARE THEY KIDDIN'?

MOMENTS LATER...

OOOH! REX, LOVER, WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOU?

THEY ALWAYS SAID I'D END UP IN THE GUTTER! THAT'S A JOKE, STAGGSY... WHY AREN'T YOU LAUGHING?

CUT THE COMEDY, REXY BOY, AND GET BACK IN THE FIGHT!

I WILL, **BIG-DOME**, IF YOU'LL JUST PUT ME BACK IN ONE PIECE!

JAVA, YOU NITWIT NEANDERTHAL! RIP THAT WIRE LOSE!

THE MASTER COMMANDS, JAVA OBEYS!

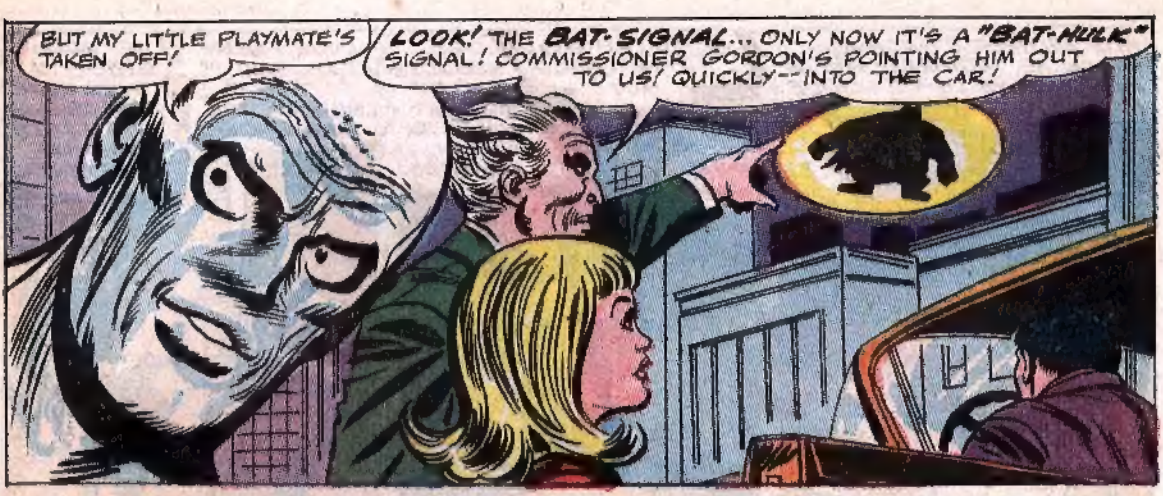
NOW, YOU BUFFOON, PLUNGE IT INTO REX'S REMAINS!

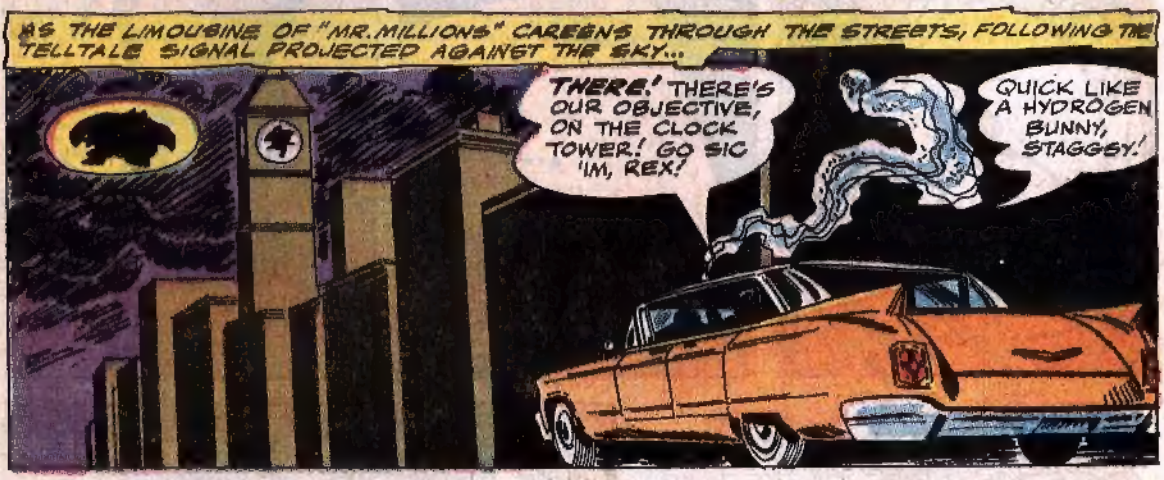
**REMAINS?** COME ON, STAGGSY--I'M A LONG WAY FROM DEAD! IN FACT, I'M VERY MUCH...

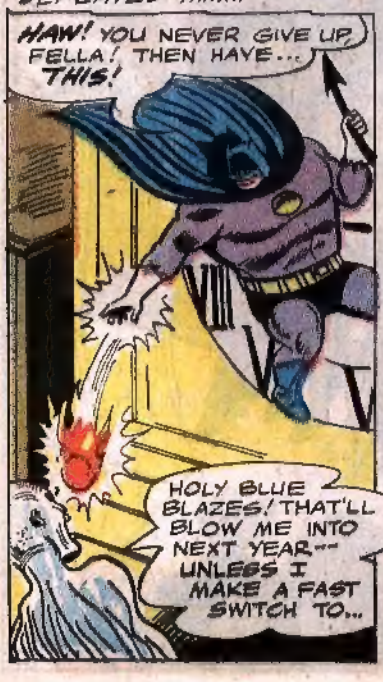
AA--LIIIVEEE!

EXCELLENT! NOW YOU MUST STOP THE **BAT-HULK**!

TACKLE


BUT MY LITTLE PLAYMATE'S TAKEN OFF!
LOOK! THE BAT-SIGNAL... ONLY NOW IT'S A "BAT-HULK" SIGNAL! COMMISSIONER GORDON'S POINTING HIM OUT TO US! QUICKLY--INTO THE CAR!


AS THE LIMOUSINE OF "MR. MILLIONS" CAREENS THROUGH THE STREETS, FOLLOWING THE TELLTALE SIGNAL PROJECTED AGAINST THE SKY...
THERE! THERE'S OUR OBJECTIVE, ON THE CLOCK TOWER! GO SIC 'IM, REX!
QUICK LIKE A HYDROGEN BUNNY, STAGGSY!


UP...UP...UP RISES THE ELEMENT MAN, TO FACE THE FOE THAT HAS TWICE DEFEATED HIM...
HAW! YOU NEVER GIVE UP, FELLA! THEN HAVE... THIS!
HOLY BLUE BLAZES! THAT'LL BLOW ME INTO NEXT YEAR--- UNLESS I MAKE A FAST SWITCH TO...

...MY USUAL HANDSOME SELF!

HAW! HAW! HAWW!
HOO-BOY!... AT LEAST I'M CLOCKING LOTS OF LAUGHS WITH THIS ROUTINE!

WITH ANOTHER CHANGE AS QUICK AS THOUGHT, **METAMORPHO** WILLS HIS UNIQUE FORM INTO...

A TRUSTY OLD **COPPER SPRING!**

BOINNG

SO YOU'RE STILL TRYIN', LITTLE BOY?

GEE... NOBODY'S CALLED ME THAT SINCE I WAS IN ROMPERS!

OKAY, FUNNY MAN, THIS IS IT! THIS IS WHERE THE GAG ENDS!

HEY, BRIGHT EYES -- I'M OVER HERE! STOP ABUSING THAT CRAZY, MIXED-UP TV ANTENNA!

RIPP

BUT THAT'S NO TV AERIAL, **METAMORPHO!** IT'S A KING-SIZED **LIGHTNING ROD**... AND NOW, AS IF NATURE ITSELF WOULD DESTROY THE THING THAT ONCE WAS **BATMAN**-- OUT OF GOTHAM'S SKIES COMES...

EEEYAAAAA!

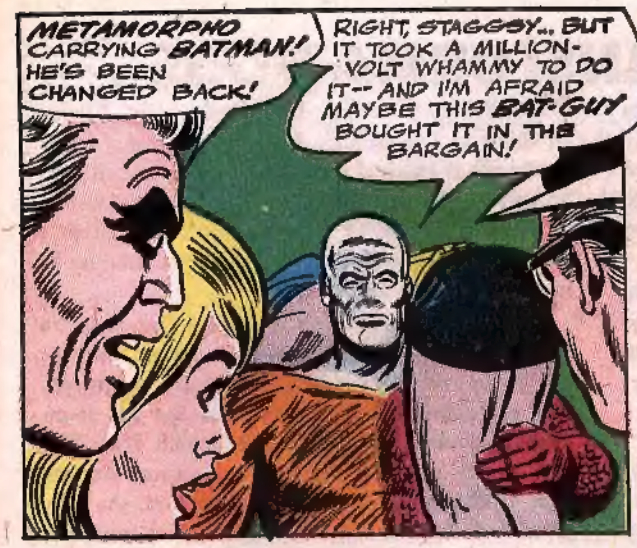
BRAZZAPPP

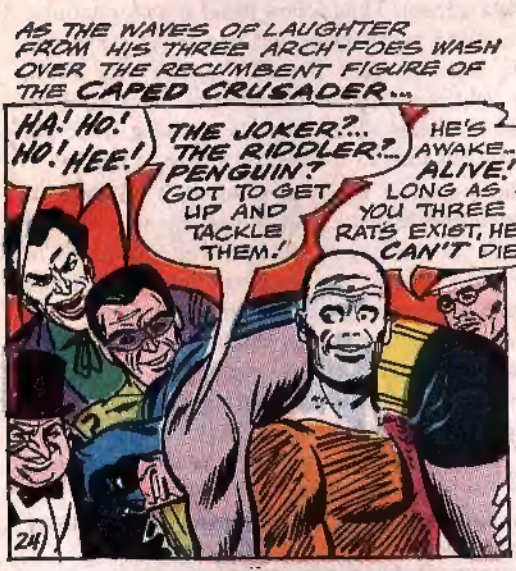
NOT MUCH LATER, DOWN ON THE STREET...

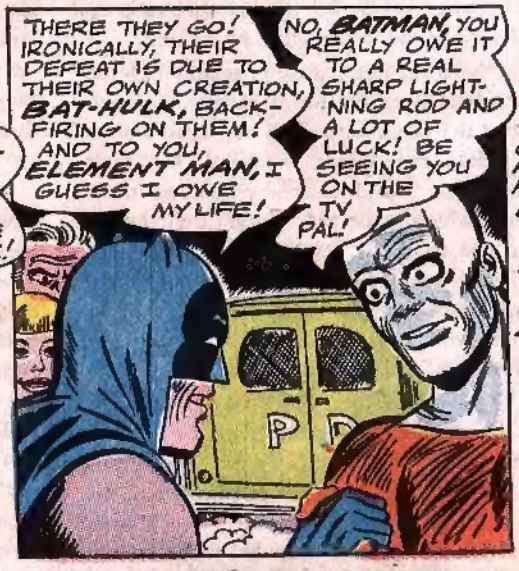
WE'VE GOT THREE OF THEM, STAGG-- THE THREE VIPERS WHO TURNED **BATMAN** INTO A FREAK!

GOOD SHOW, COMMISSIONER -- BUT WHERE'S **MY** FREAK? WHERE'S **ELEMENT MAN**... AND **BAT-HULK?**

OOOH-- LOOK!






Professor Ira West
invites you to attend
the marriage of his daughter
Iris
to
Barry Allen
in the November issue of The FLASH

# STRANGE TRANSFORMATIONS

The heroes of this issue represent the two types of metamorphosis most frequently found in legend and literature. METAMORPHO is a shape-shifter, taking other forms deliberately, while BATMAN, as Bat-Hulk, is an innocent victim, transformed against his will.

Both types are found in Homer's *Odyssey*. Menelaus, husband of Helen, tells how, on his voyage from Troy, he was blown off course and wound up in Egypt. He learned that only the immortal seer Proteus, the Old Man of the Sea, could tell him how to get back to Greece. Disguising themselves as seals, Menelaus and three sailors caught Proteus napping and held him fast, though he turned himself into a lion, a snake, a panther, a boar, running water and a giant tree. At last the old man gave up and told Menelaus the information he wanted.

Odysseus, hero of *The Odyssey*, relates how he and his men landed on the isle of Aeaea. A scouting party met the witch Circe and her tame wolves and lions. Circe entertained them—all but their suspicious leader, Eurylochus—by feeding them drugged food which made them forget their homeland. Then she used her wand to turn them into pigs. Eurylochus told Odysseus what had happened, and the wily Greek sought out Circe. He resisted Circe's magic with a marvelous herb given him by the god Hermes, and forced her to restore his comrades to human form.

One of the commonest transformations in folklore is that from man to wolf. Petronius Arbitor, a leading figure at the court of Nero, tells in his *Satyricon* of a soldier who could turn into a wolf. One night, such a beast was wounded while attacking livestock, and next morning, the soldier bore an identical wound.

In the Icelandic *Volsunga Saga*, Sigmund and Sinfjotli find a pair of enchanted wolf-skins. They don them and are turned into wolves. For some time they are unable to resume their human shapes; and when they do, they burn the skins.

Even one of King Arthur's Knights was a wolf-man, according to Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte D'Arthur*. This was "Sir Marrok the good knight that was betrayed by his wife, for she made him seven year a werewolf."

Perhaps his story was similar to that of Bisclavaret, in Marie de France's *Lay of the Were-Wolf*. This unfortunate man turned into a wolf and prowled at night. But his evil wife hid his clothes while he was gone, one night, and without them he could not resume his human shape. At last, he was befriended by a king who discovered how to break the enchantment, and banished the wicked wife.

A different change is described by Lucius Apuleius in *The Golden Ass*. The hero sees a sorceress use a magical ointment to turn herself into an owl. Wishing to find out what it's like to fly, he gets a slave-girl to steal some of the ointment for him. But she gets the wrong one and he is transformed into a donkey.

The Second Kalandar's Tale, in *The Arabian Nights*, concerns a Prince who is turned into an ape by an evil Jinni, or Ifrit. Eventually, a princess who is learned in sorcery discovers the ape is an enchanted man and tries to disenchant him. The Ifrit shows up and engages in a shape-shifting duel with the princess: he becomes a lion, she conjures up a sword to slay it; he turns into a scorpion, she is a serpent. Then follow other transformations: vulture and eagle, black cat and wolf, worm and cock, and two fish. Finally, burning like coals, they fight it out to the finish—and the Ifrit is reduced to ashes. The princess is dying, too; yet she still has time to restore the prince to normal.

The legend of the swan-maidens is believed to have started in India, but it has spread as far as Iceland. In the Lay of Volund, which is found in *The Elder Edda*, three brothers, Volund, Egil and Slagfith, discover three swan-maidens, who have doffed the feathery cloaks which change them into swans, sitting on the shore, spinning. By stealing the swan-garments, the young men force the girls to keep their human shapes. They then marry the trio of beauties. But after eight years, while their husbands are out hunting, the swan-maidens find their hidden garments, don them, and fly away forever.

A somewhat similar tale is connected with the house of Lusignan of France. The fairy Melusine was cursed, so that she became a serpent from the waist down every Saturday. Only by marrying a man who would not see her on that one day could she ever find release. She met and became the wife of Count Raymond of Lusignan, who kept the weekly taboo for some time. At last, however, he spied on her, one Saturday, and saw the transformation. Later, during a quarrel, he called her a "false serpent." She left, never to return.

The best-known metamorphosis in modern fiction is that from Dr. Henry Jekyll to Edward Hyde in the tale by Robert Louis Stevenson. Jekyll invented a potion which could separate a man's good and evil personalities. He might have become an angel if his mind had turned in that direction when he tested the drug; but evil thoughts made him, instead, the thoroughly devilish Hyde, whose crimes led to his—and Jekyll's—doom.